



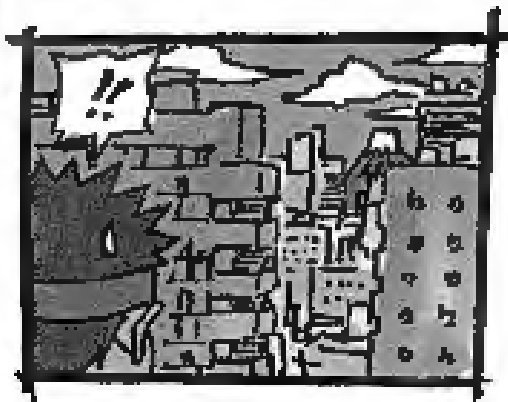
NARUTO

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Masashi Kishimoto volume

23



岸本 齊史

It's been a year since I moved into my current apartment and I just recently realized something... I can see Mt. Fuji from my porch. It took me this long to notice!

—Masashi Kishimoto, 2004

Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** (Mechanism). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.





NARUTO VOL. 23
The SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

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PARENTAL ADVISORY
NARUTO is rated T for Teen and is recommended
for ages 13 and up. This volume contains realistic
and fantasy violence.

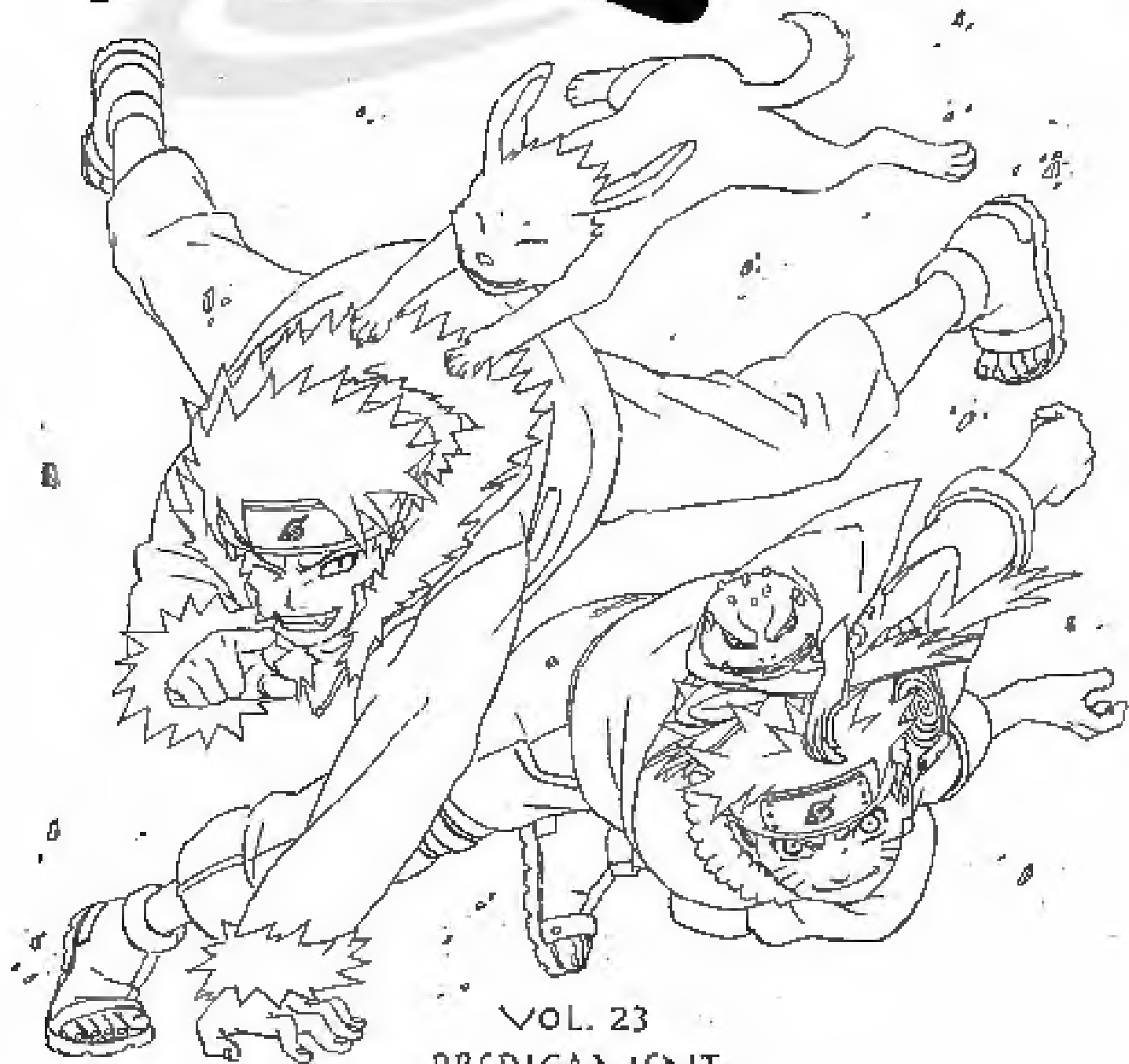
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SHONEN JUMP MANGA EDITION

NARUTO



VOL. 23
PREDICAMENT

STORY AND ART BY
MASASHI KISHIMOTO



Orochimaru



Jiraiya



Kabuto



Kimimaro



Tsunade
綱手

Twelve years ago a destructive nine-tailed fox spirit attacked the ninja village of Konohagakure. The *Hokage*, or village champion, defeated the fox by sealing its soul into the body of a baby boy. Now that boy, Uzumaki Naruto, has grown up to be a ninja-in-training, learning the art of ninjutsu with his cellmates Sakura and Sasuke.

Naruto and company take on the Chûnin Selection Exams but suffer a sudden attack from Orochimaru in the Forest of Death. Orochimaru leaves a curse mark on Sasuke's body and vanishes, only to return during the final round to launch *Operation Destroy Konoha!* While Naruto battles Gaara, the Third Hokage falls to Orochimaru.

After the funeral, the mysterious Tsunade becomes Fifth Hokage. Sasuke flees Konohagakure with the Sound Ninja Four. Shikamaru and a cell hurry to pursue Sasuke, but Choji and then Neji are struck down by the Sound Ninja. Can Sasuke be saved from himself?!

The Story So Far...

CHARACTERS

Sasuke
サスケ

Naruto
ナルト
Sakura
サクラ

Shikamaru



Choji



大塚キバ&赤丸



Akamaru

日向ネジ



Neji

The Sound Ninja Four

左近



Sakon

次郎坊



Jirobo

多由也



Tayuya

鬼童丸



Kidomaru



NARUTO

VOL. 23
PREDICAMENT

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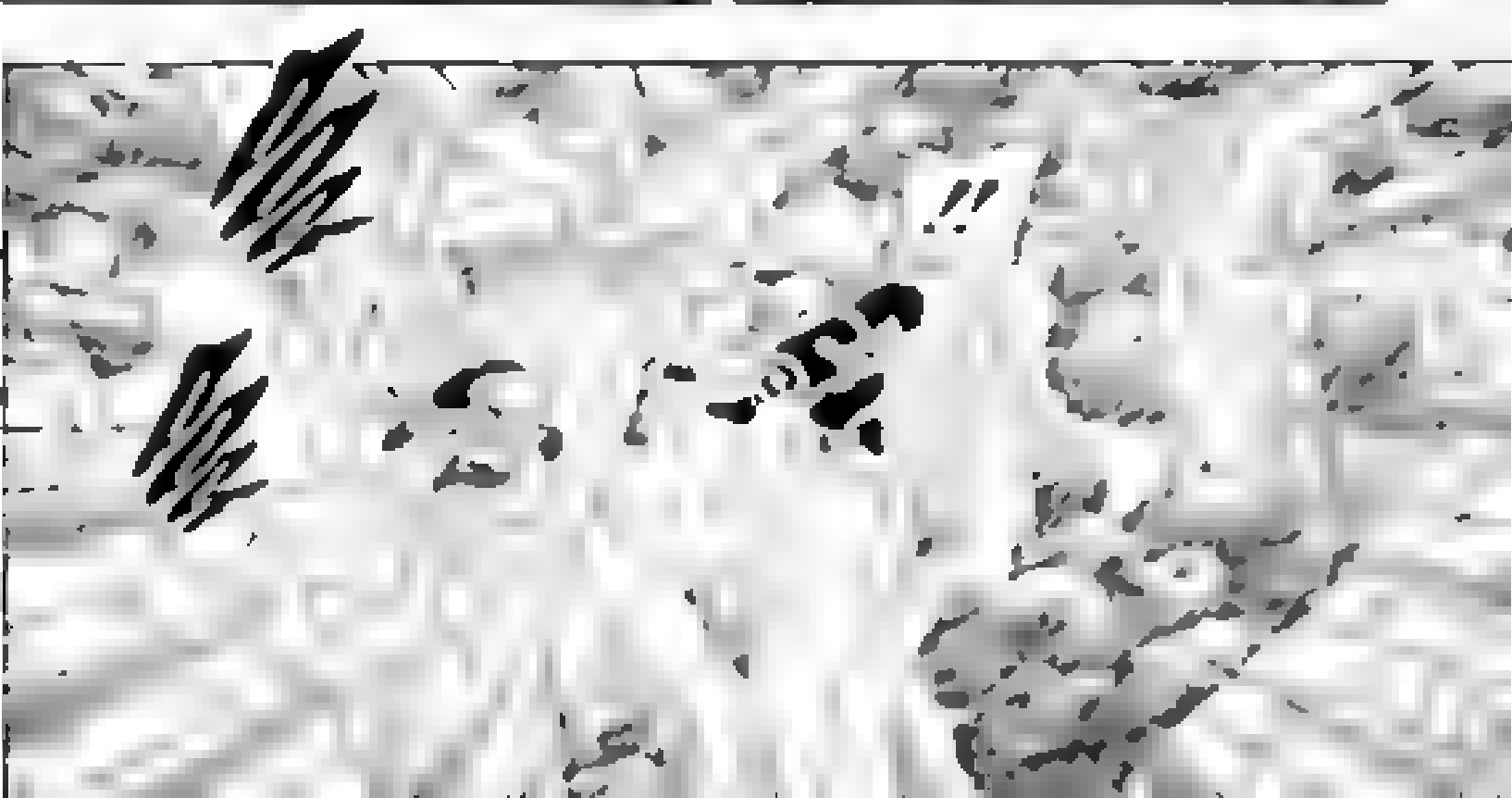
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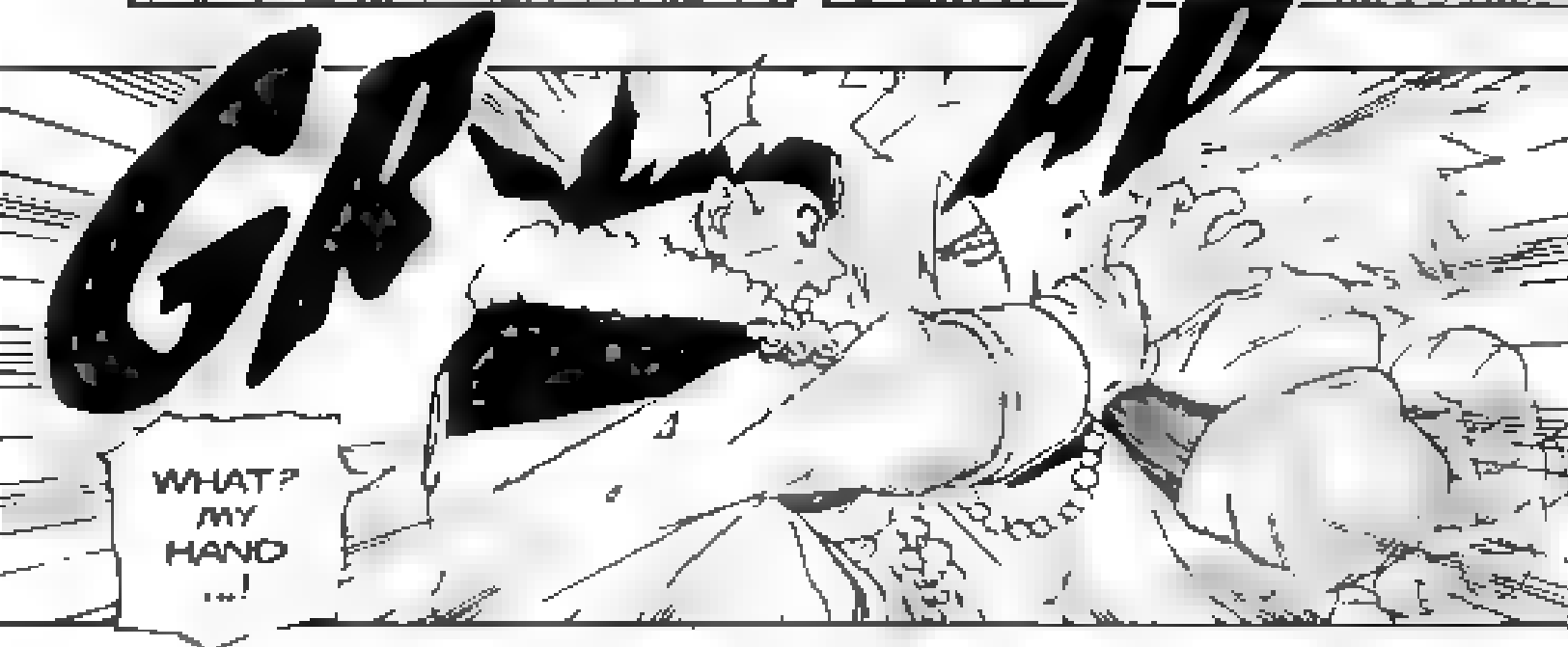
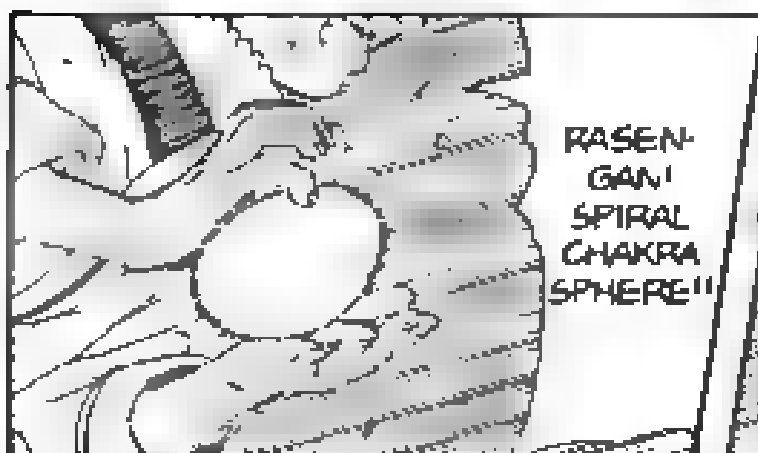


Number 200: According to Plan...!!









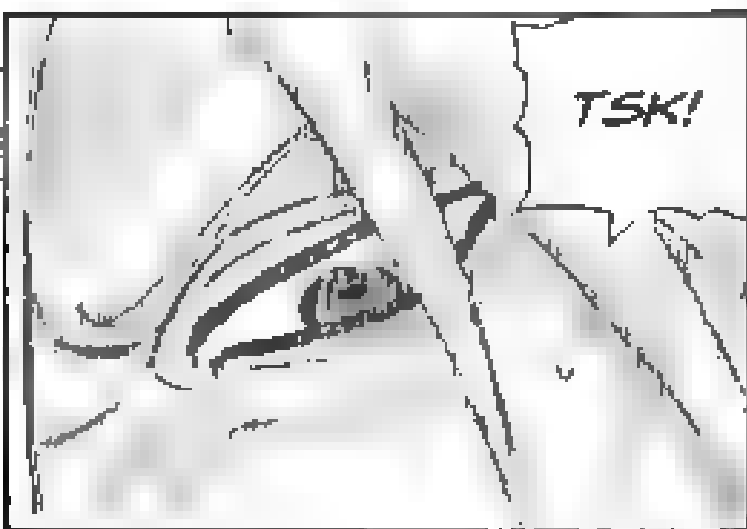
TSUGA!
TUNNELING
FANG!!

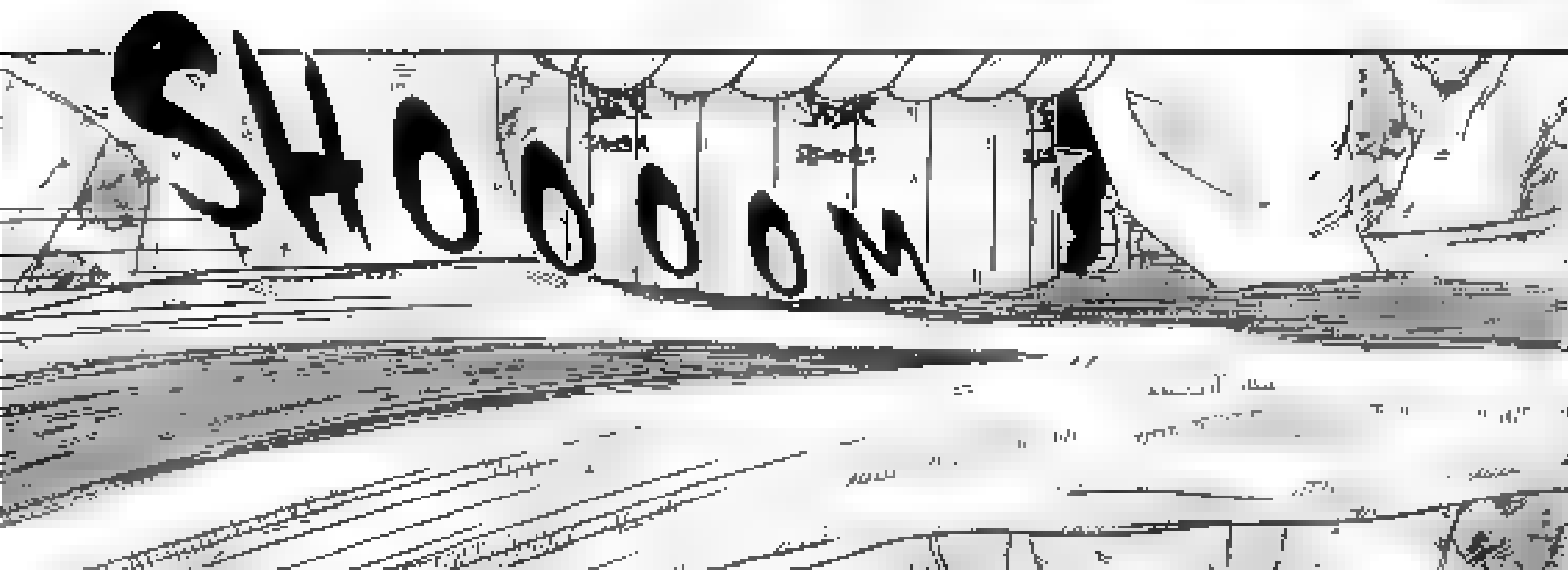
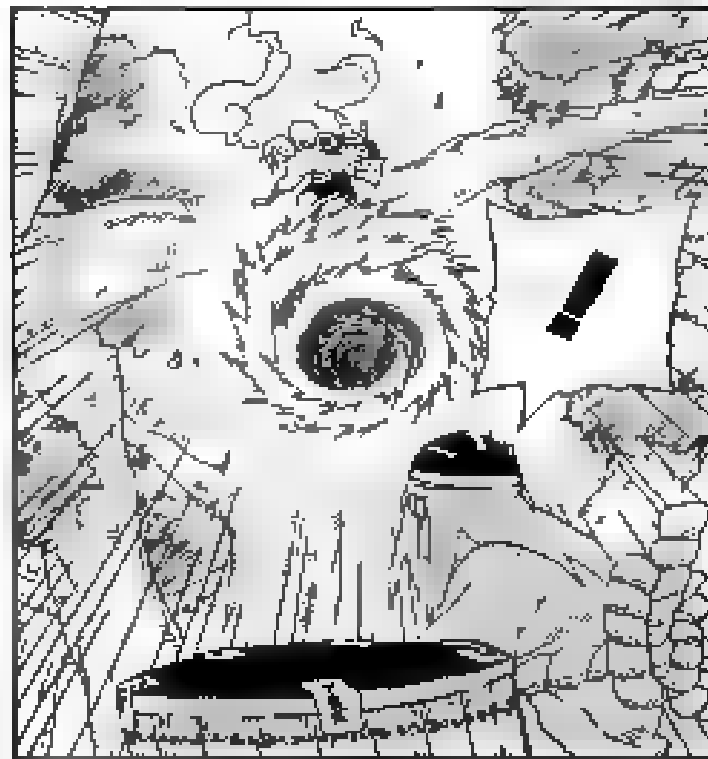
BOOF!!



TSK!

THIS
ONE'S A
SHADOW
DOPPEL-
GANGER
TOO!!

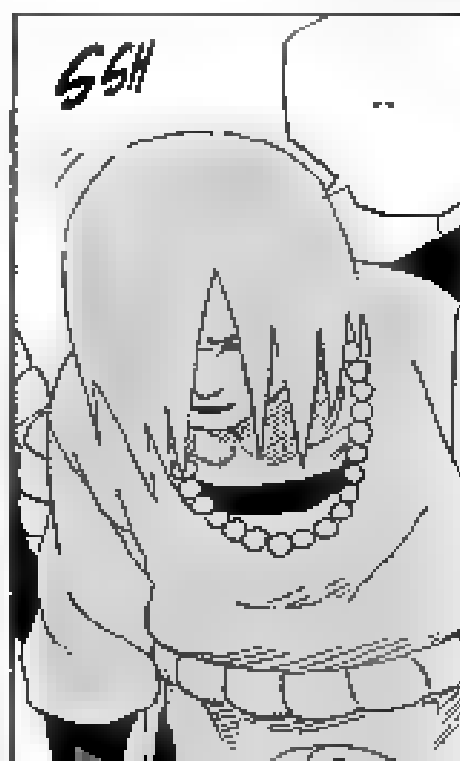












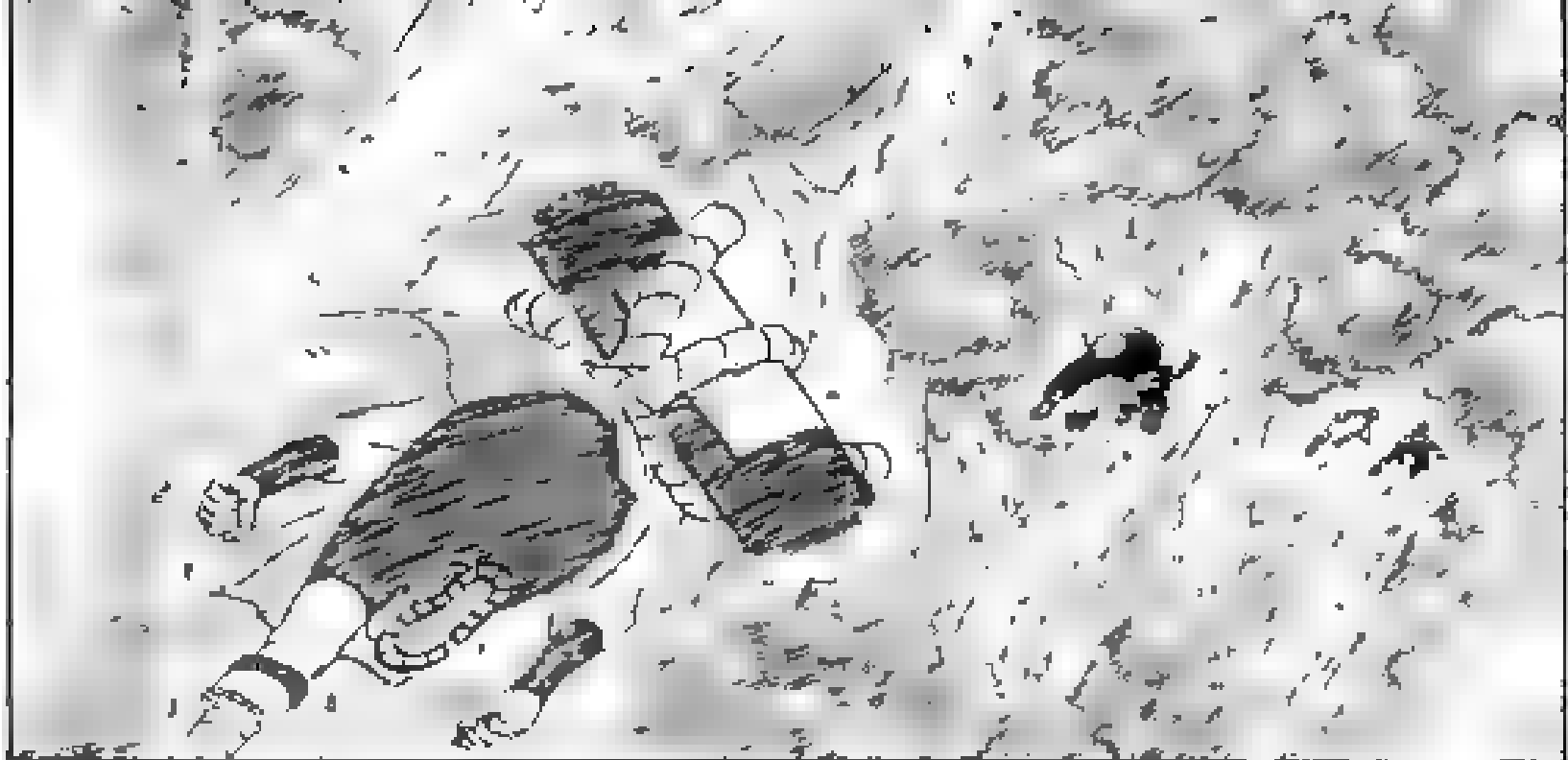


YOU
WON'T
GET
AWAY
!!



HE'S
FASTER
THAN I
THOUGHT!!





WOOF!!



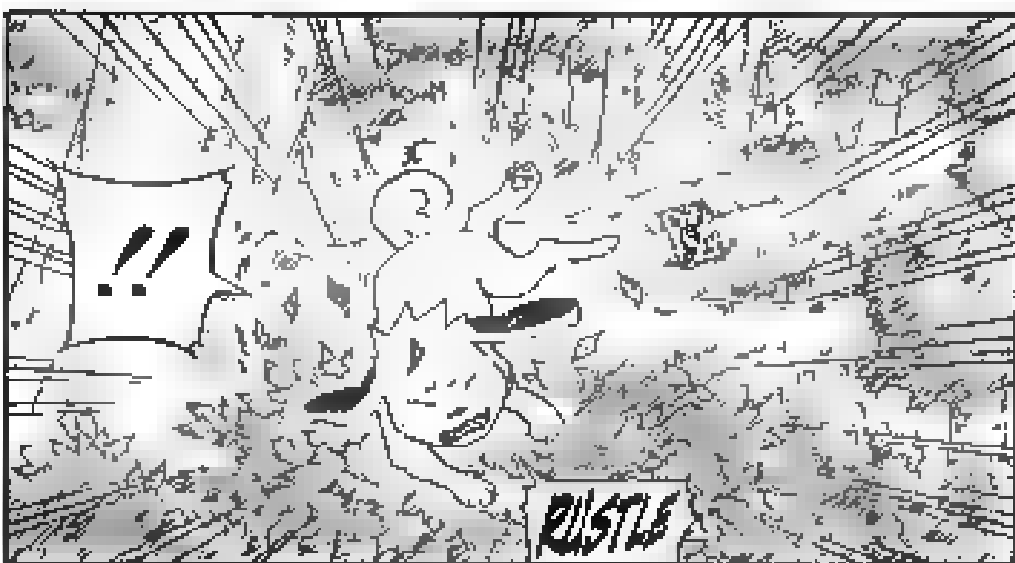
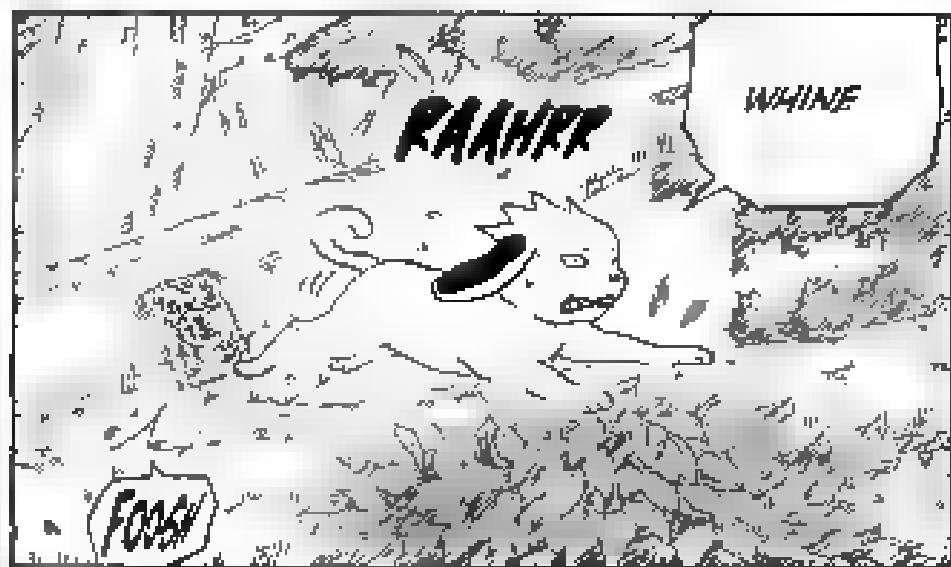
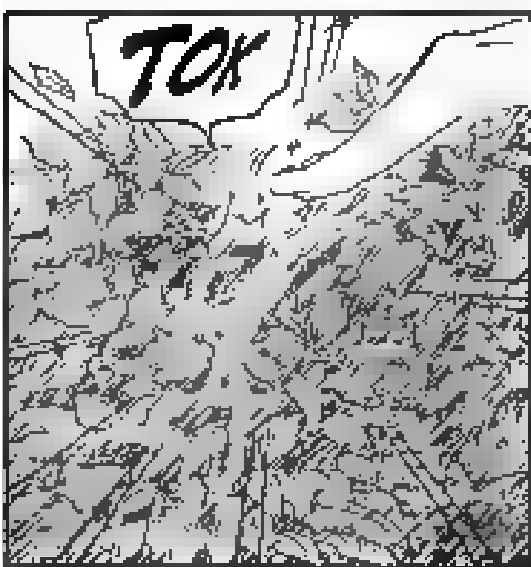
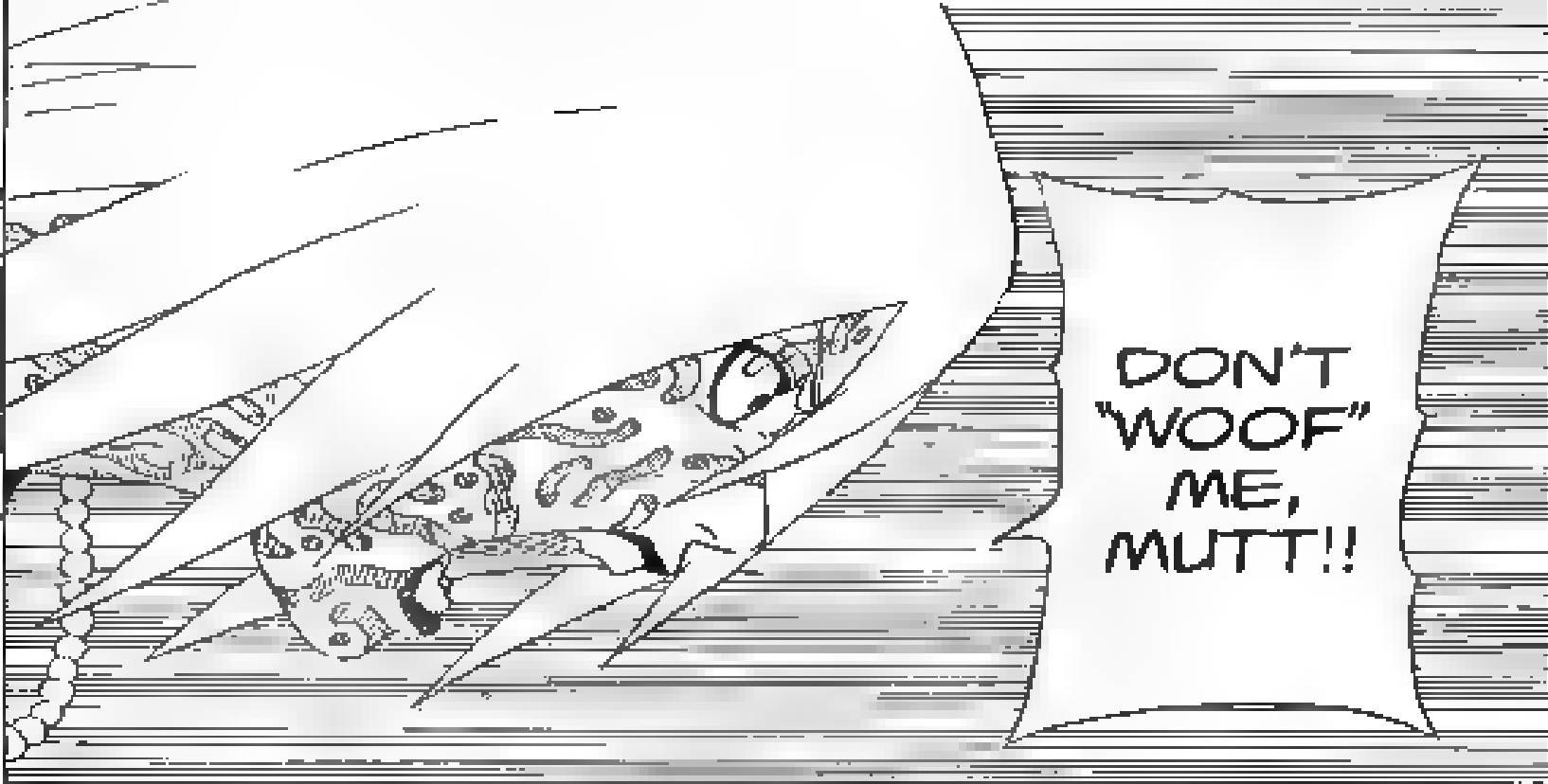
AKA-MARU!!

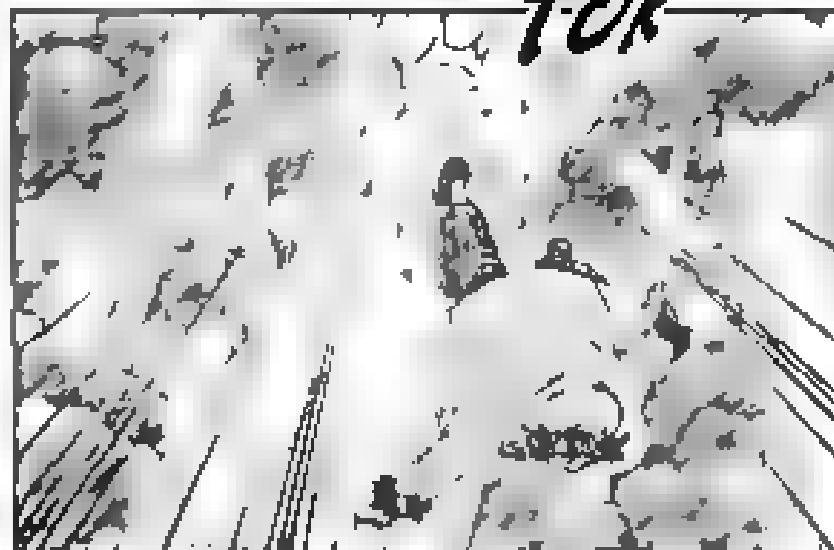
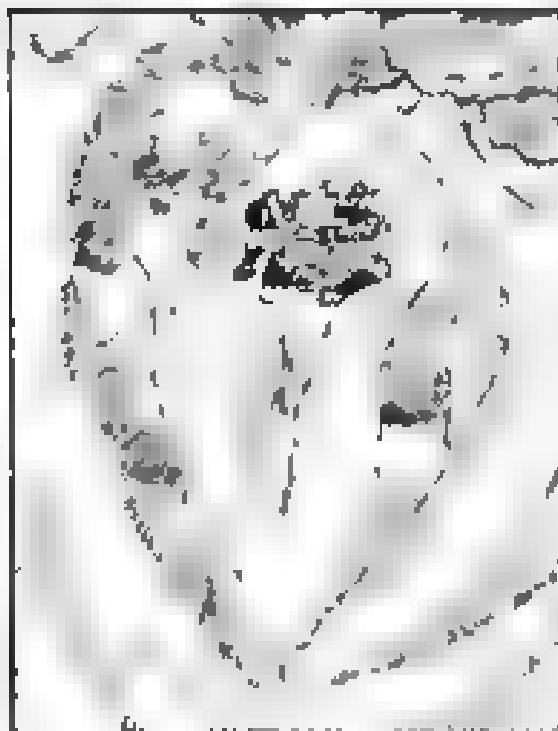
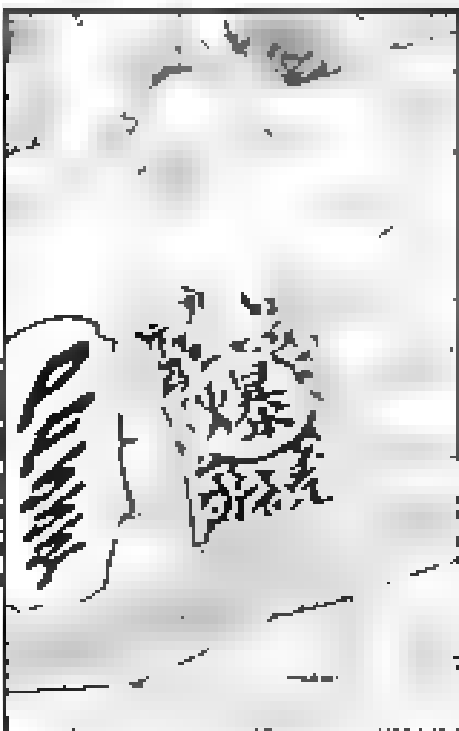


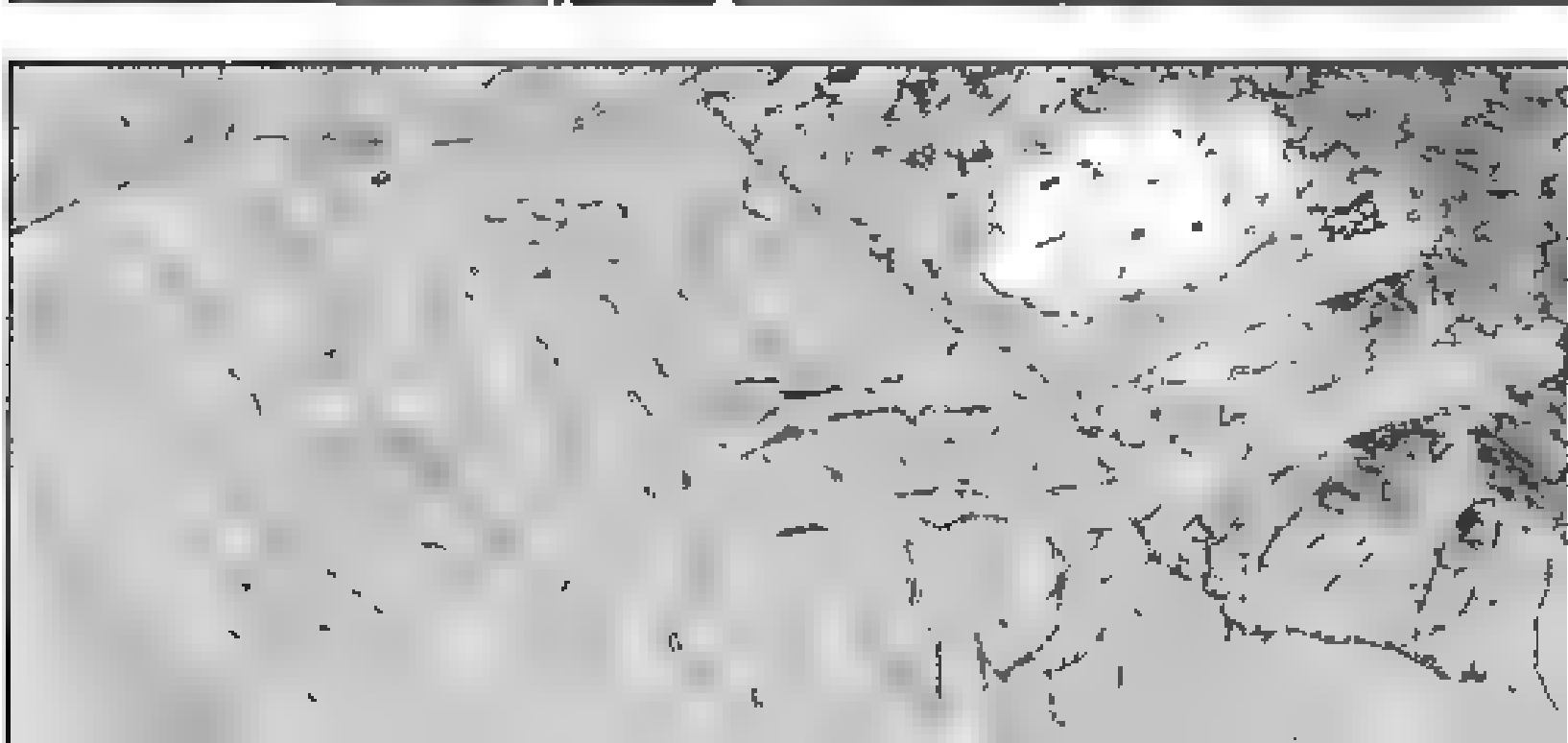
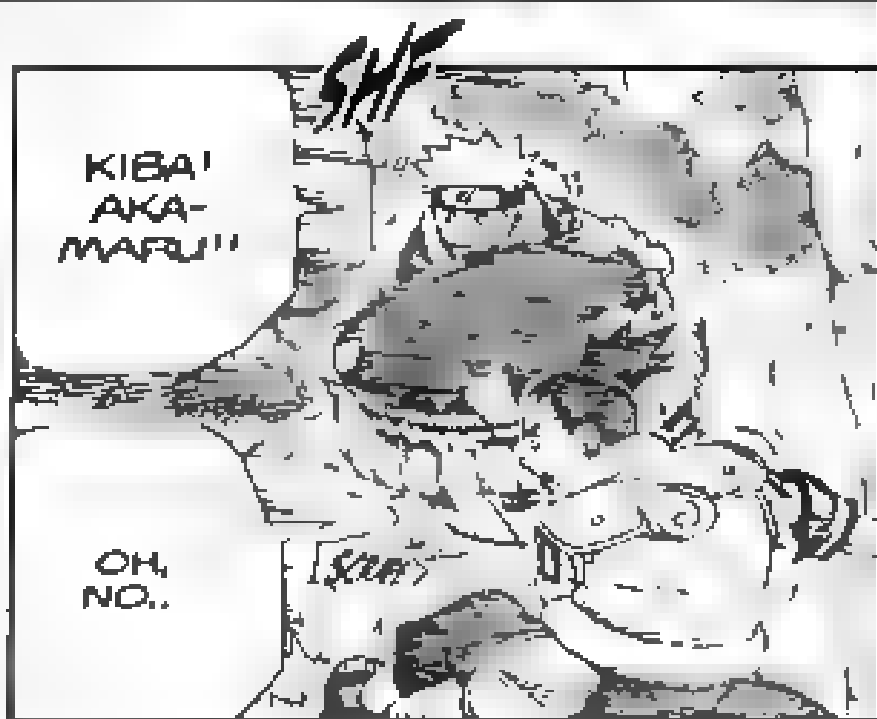
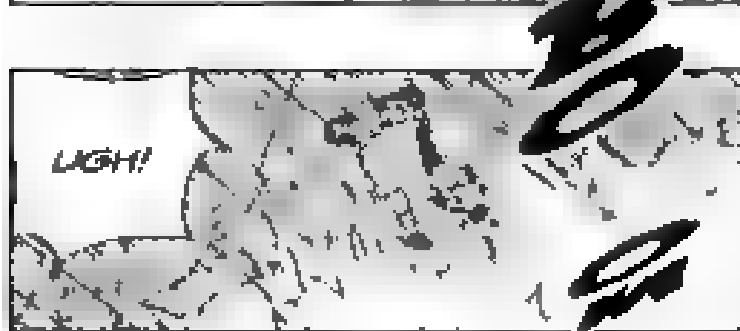
GRRR



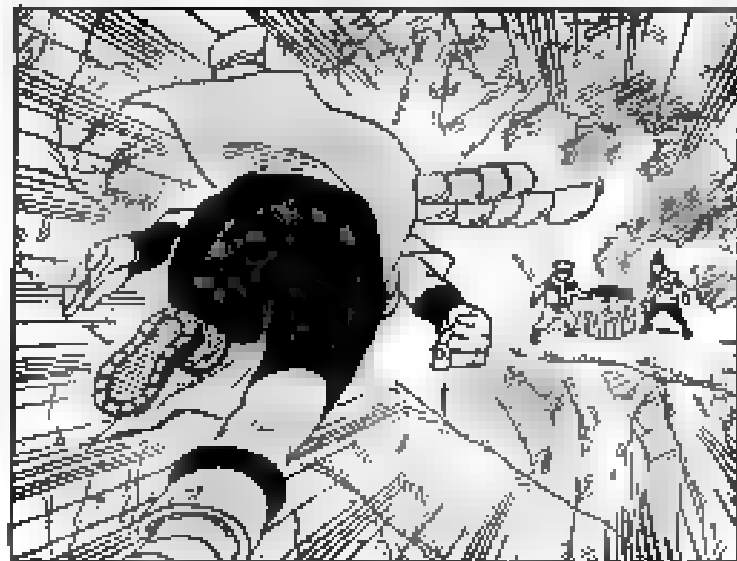
HURRY
BACK AS
SOON AS
IT'S SET!



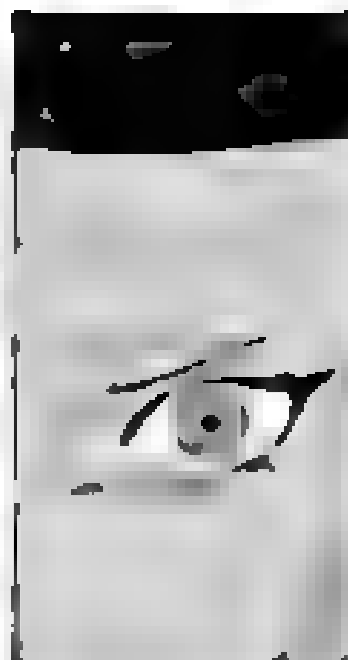
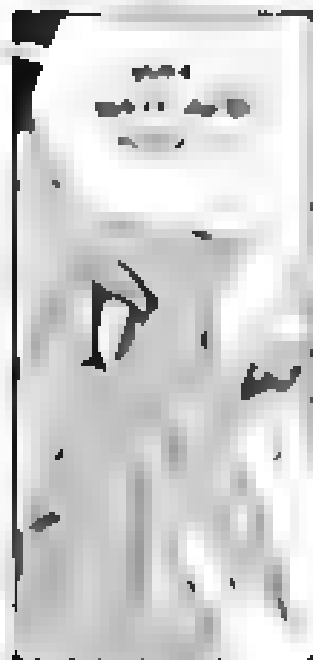








READ THIS WAY

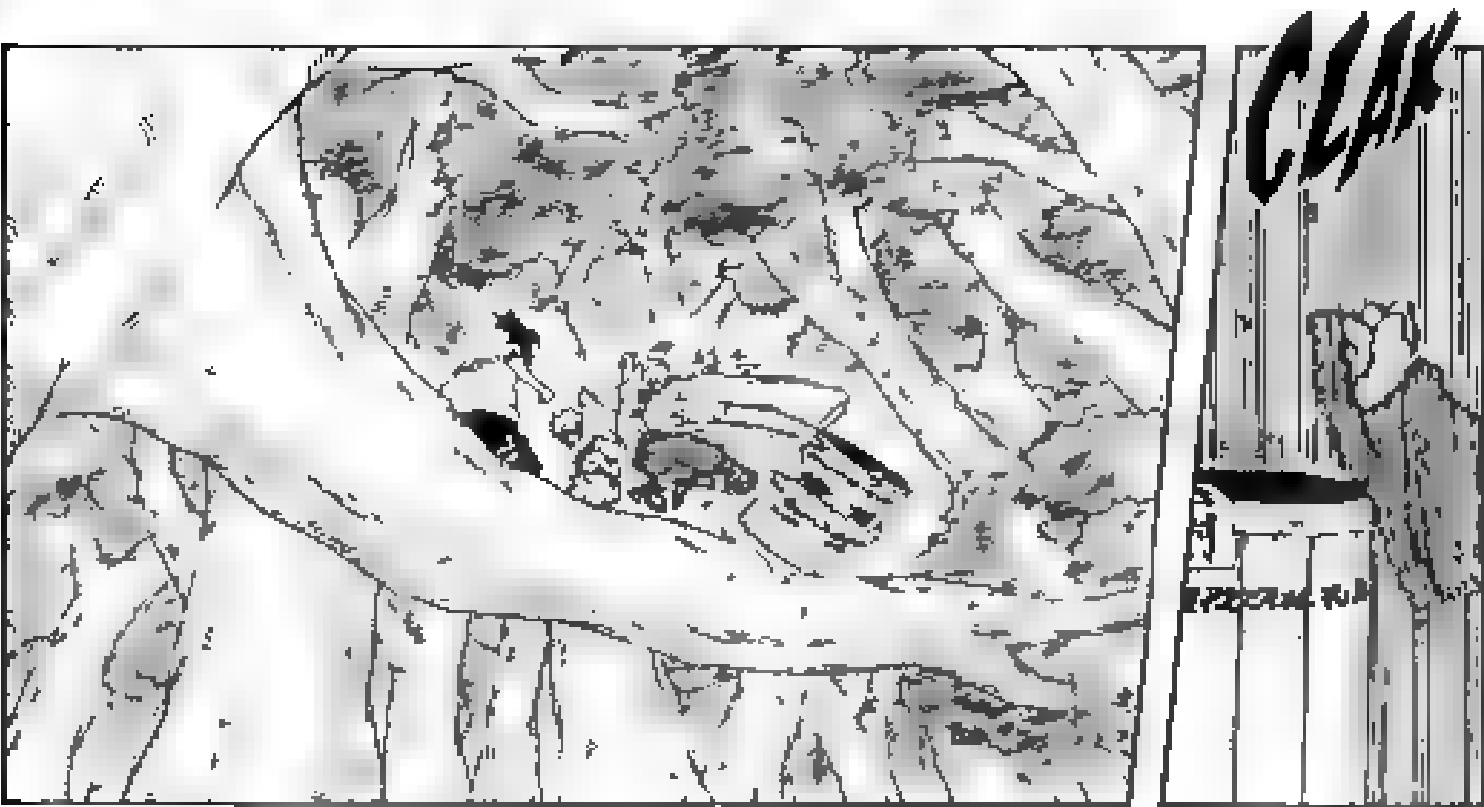
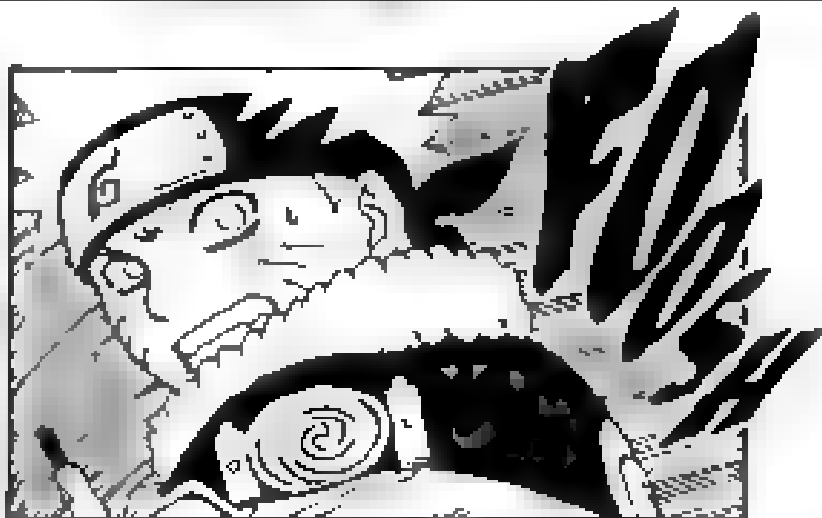


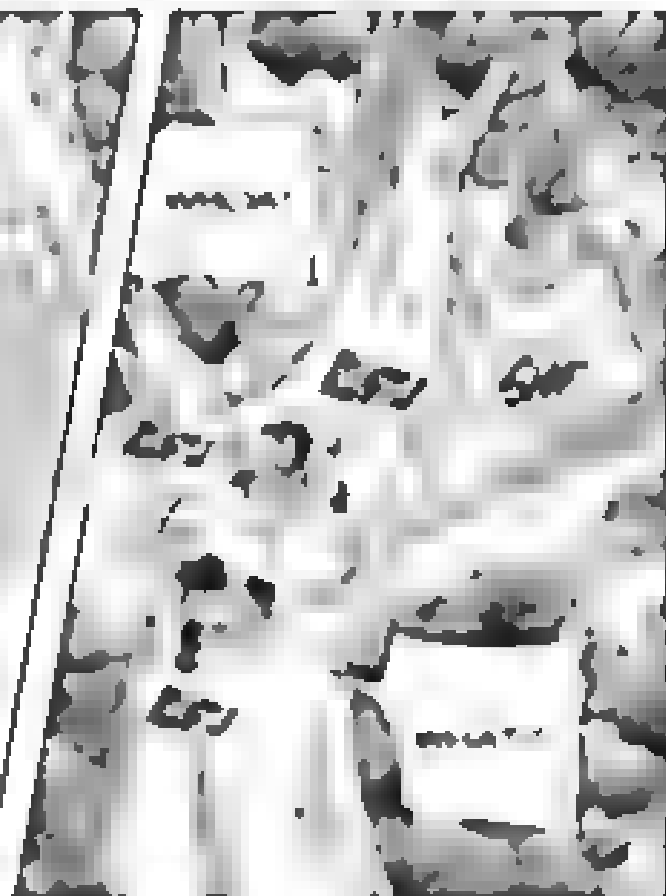
NO

TM



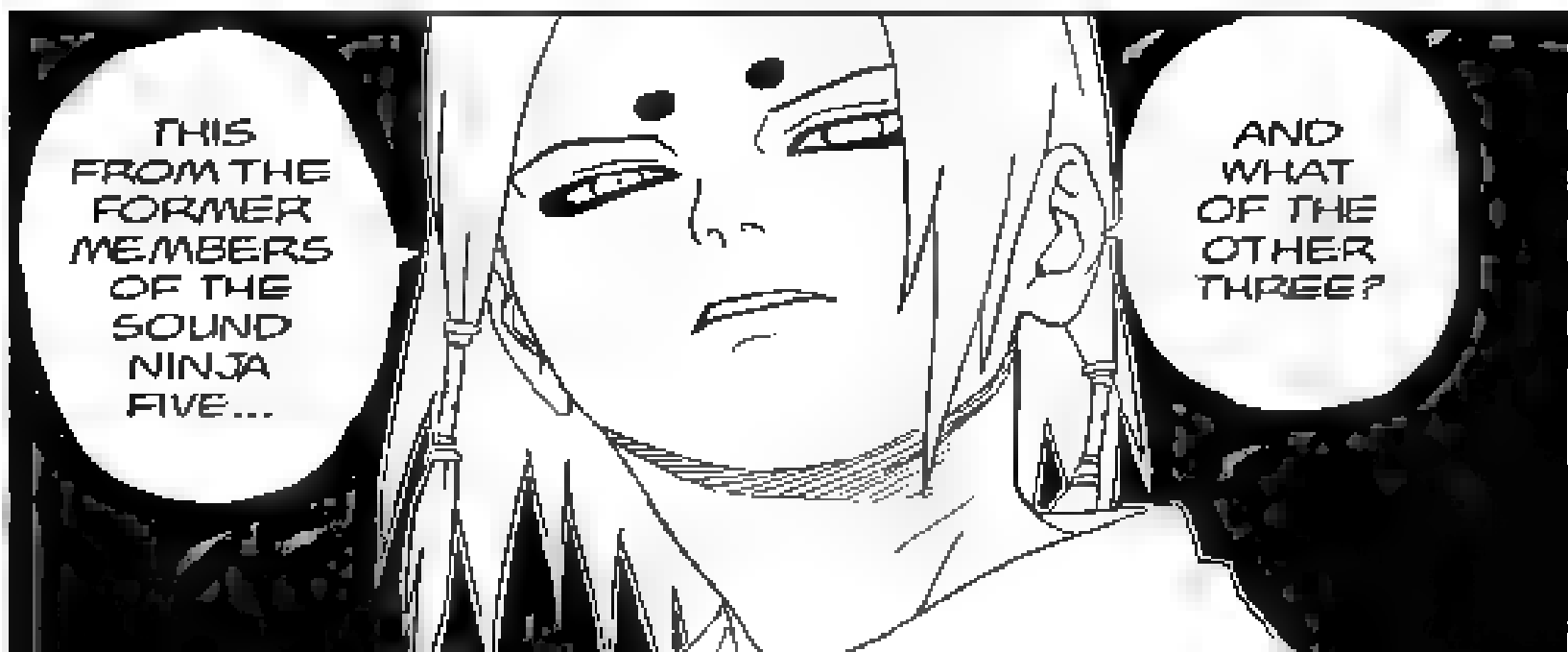
Number 201: Miscalculation...!!





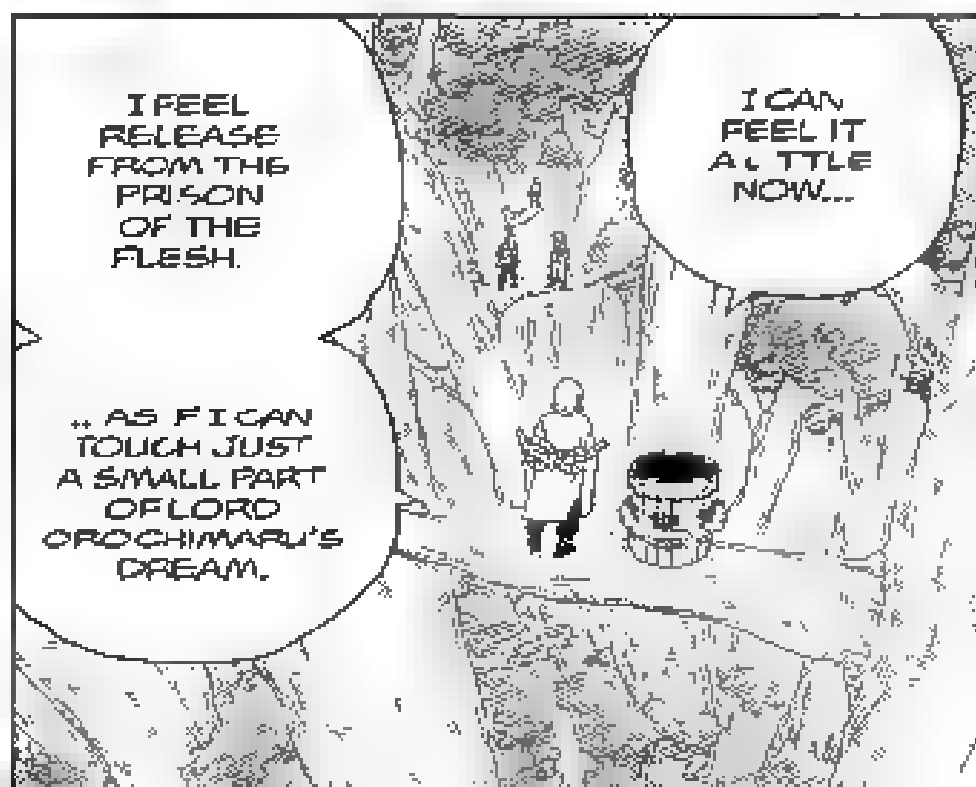
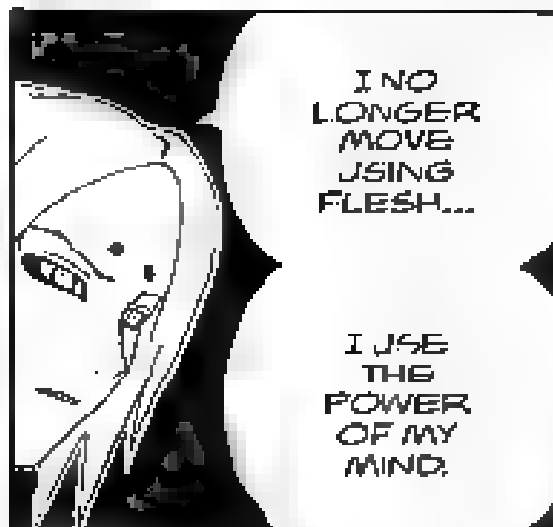
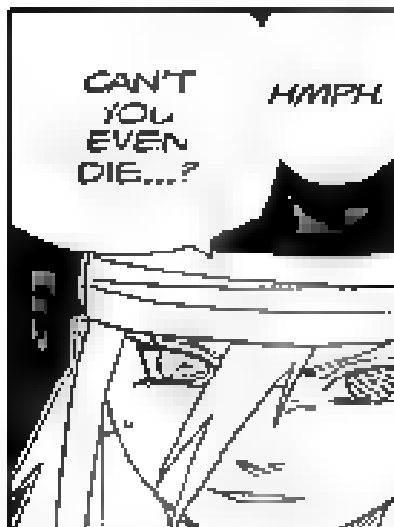


YOU'RE
LATE...
TAYUYA.



THIS
FROM THE
FORMER
MEMBERS
OF THE
SOUND
NINJA
FIVE...

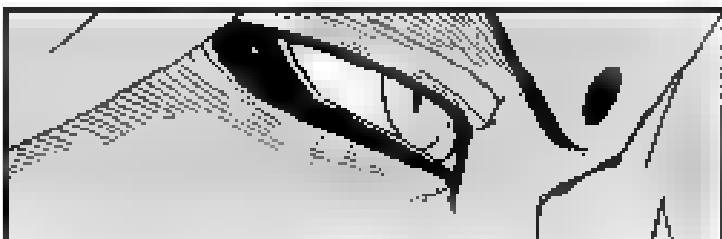
AND
WHAT
OF THE
OTHER
THREE?

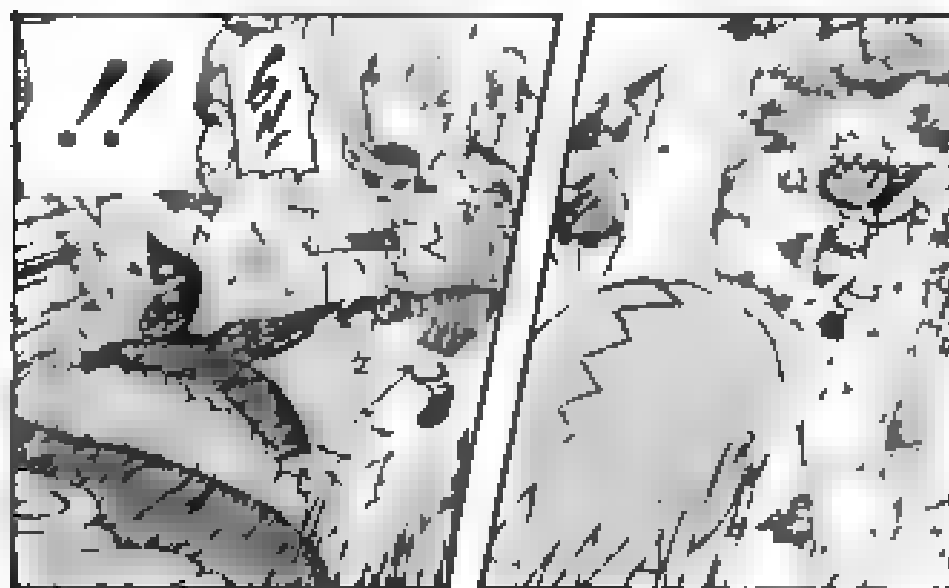


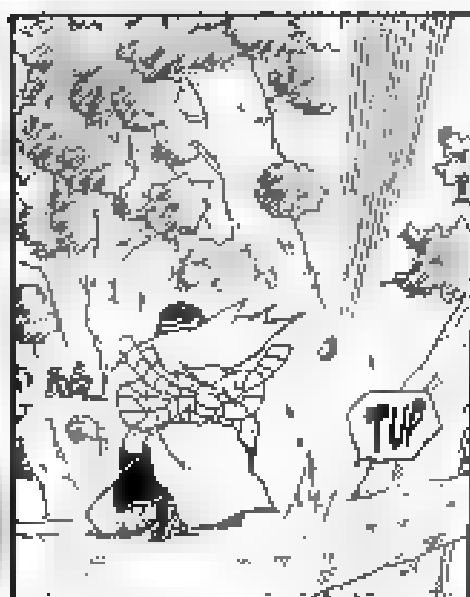
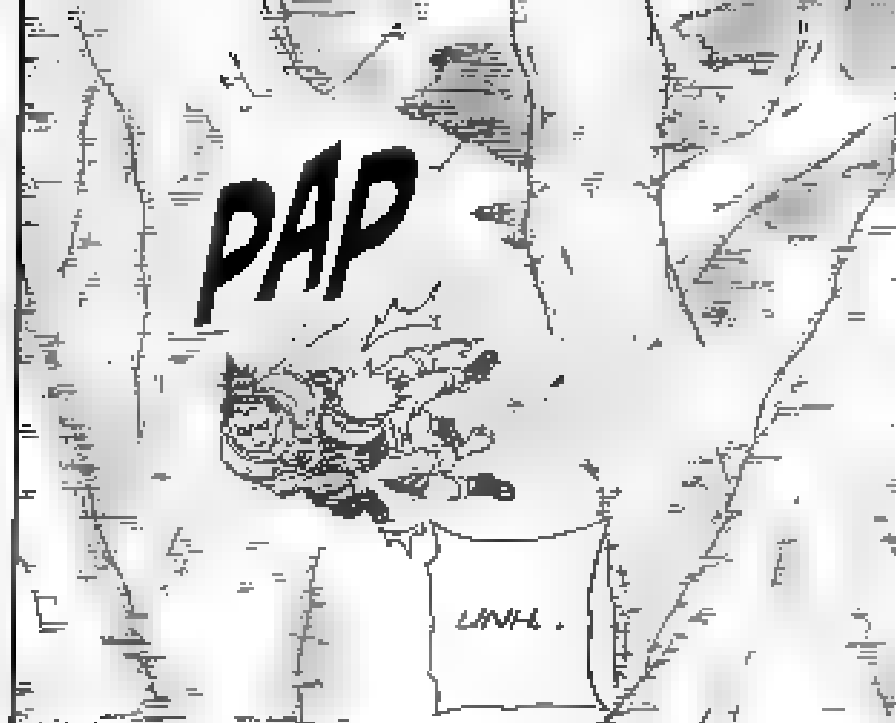
I FEEL
RELEASE
FROM THE
PRISON
OF THE
FLESH.

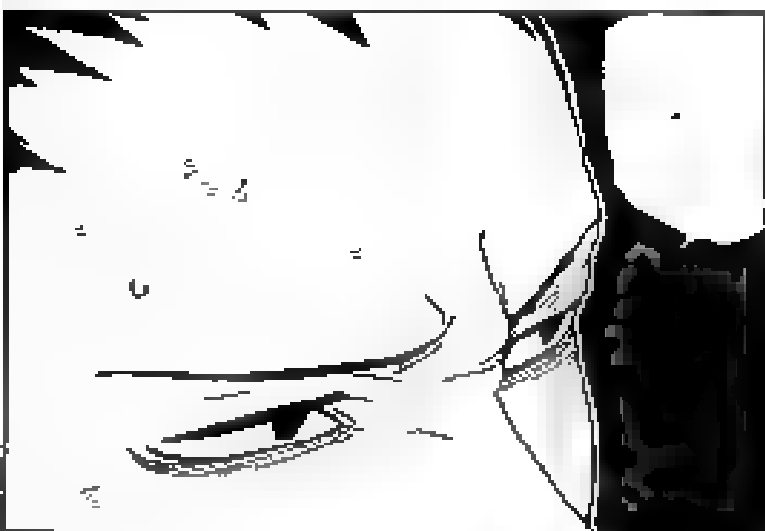
.. AS I CAN
TOUCH JUST
A SMALL PART
OF LORD
OROCHIMARU'S
DREAM.

I CAN
FEEL IT
A LITTLE
NOW...

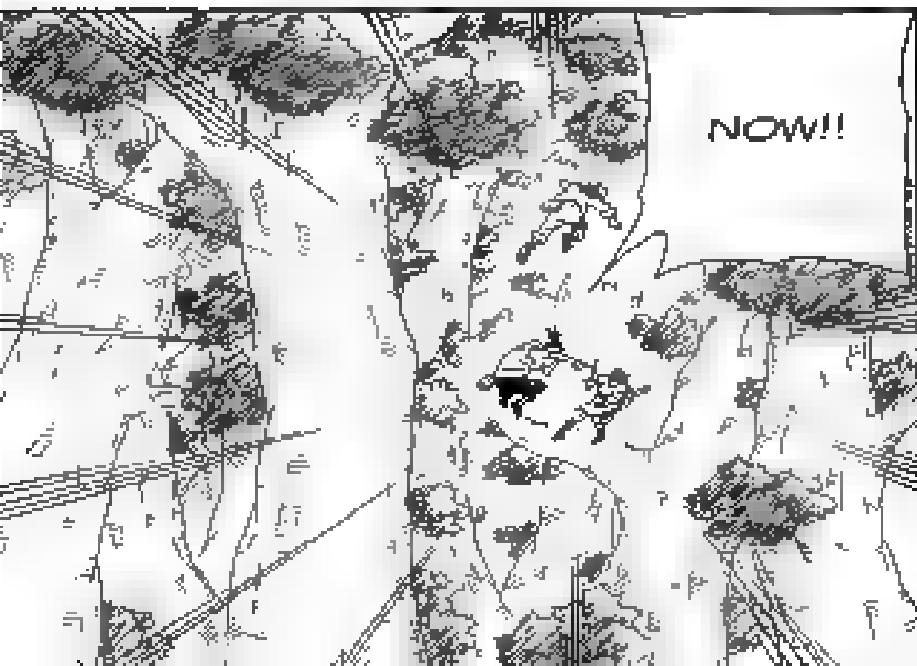
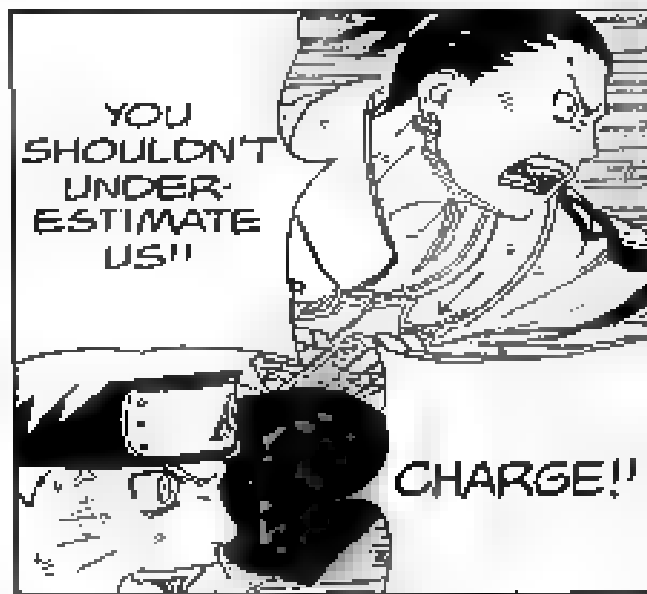


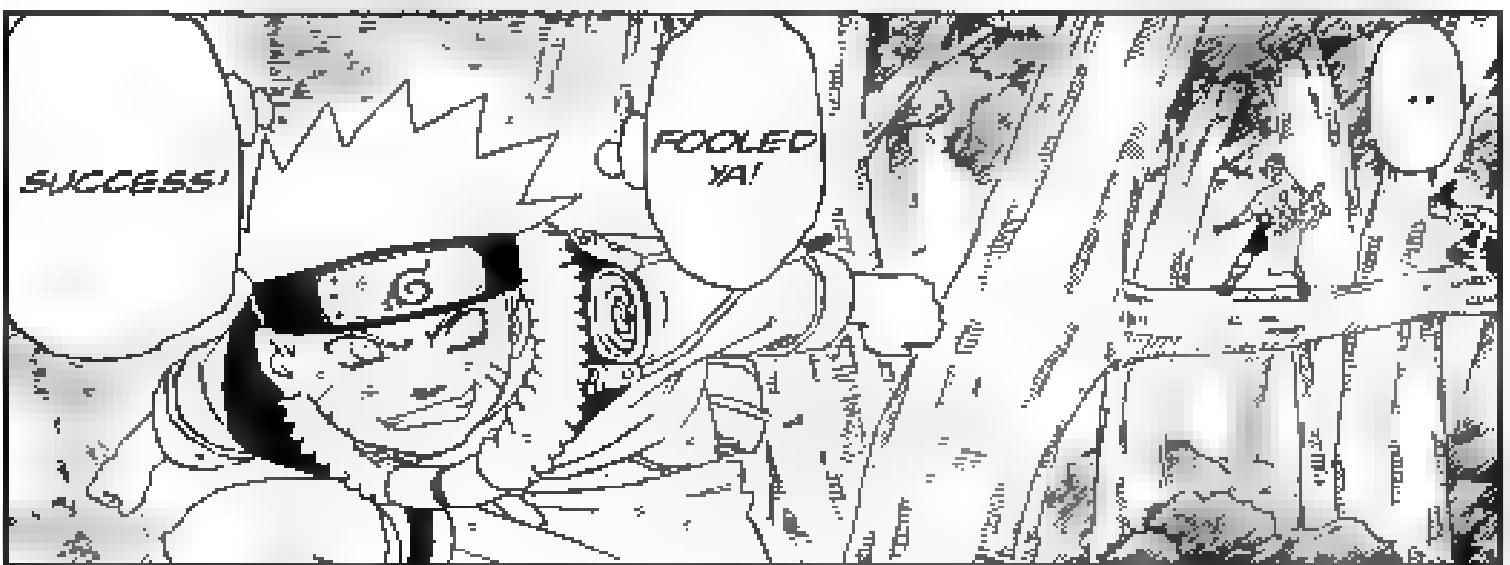












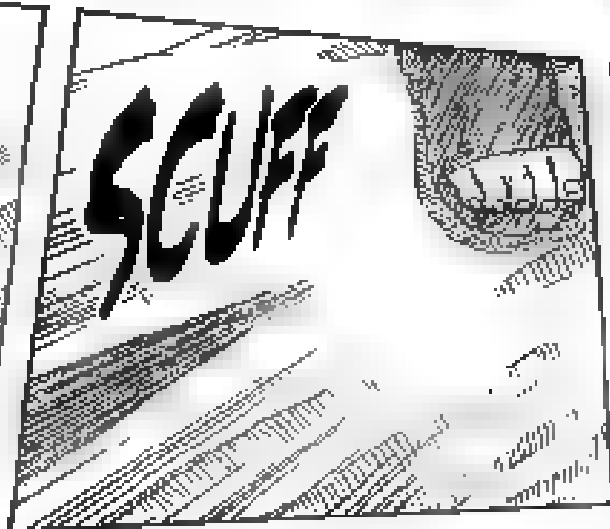


TEAM-
WORK?
THIS IS
CHEAT-
ING!

WHAT?!
YOU
TRICKED
ME!



TAK



SCUFF



!!

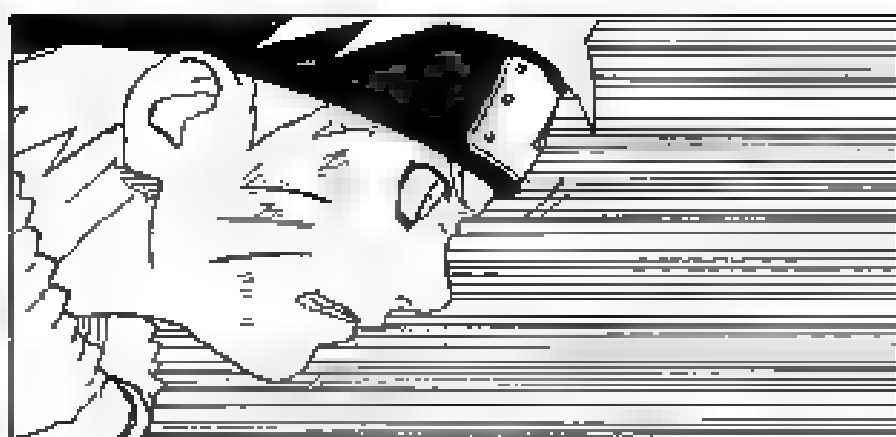
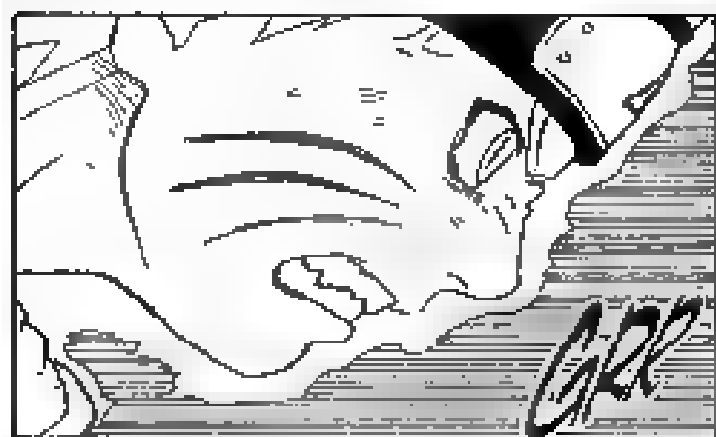
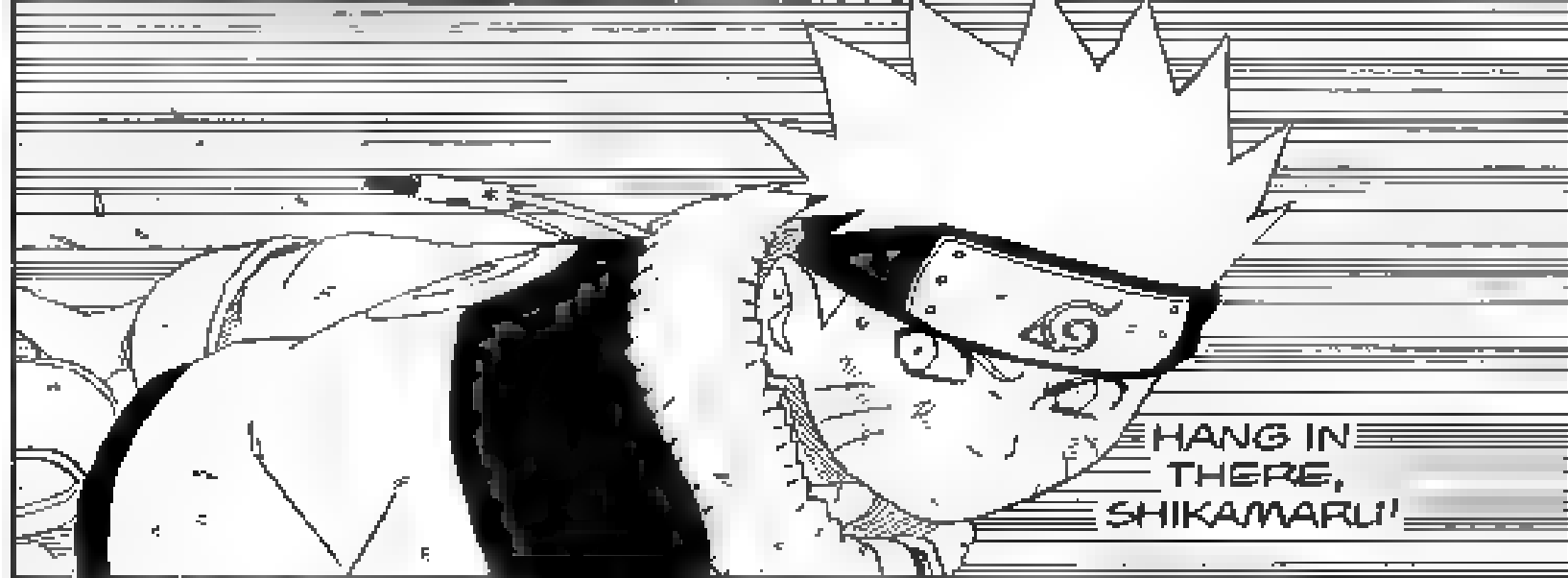
REMEMBER..
JUTSU ISN'T
ALL A NINJA
KNOWS,

WELL..
AT LEAST
NARUTO
GOT AWAY..

YOU
CAN'T BE
FOOLED
TWICE?



TUP








A black and white manga panel showing Kabuto Yamanaka lying in a wooden coffin. He has a large, spiky afro and is wearing a dark, patterned robe. His arms are crossed over his chest. The coffin is made of wooden planks. Two speech bubbles are present: one on the left and one on the right.

YOU ARE
DESPICABLE...

KABUTO...

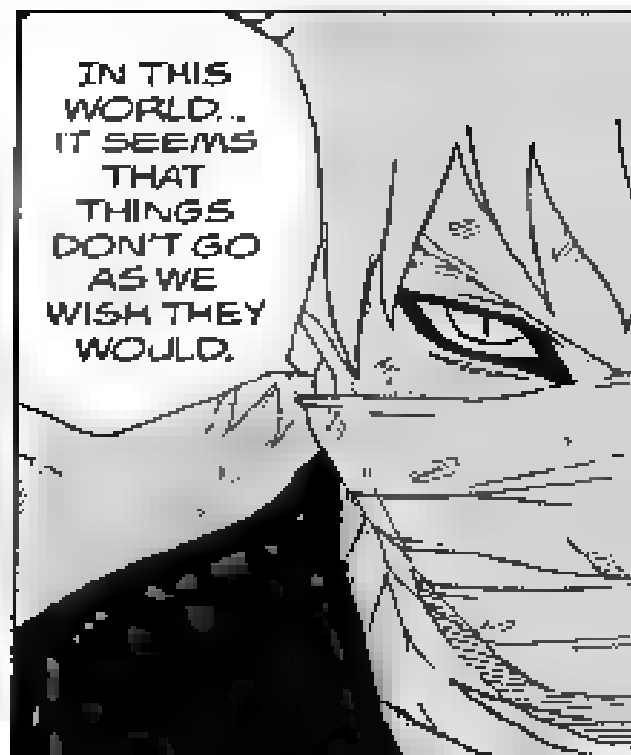
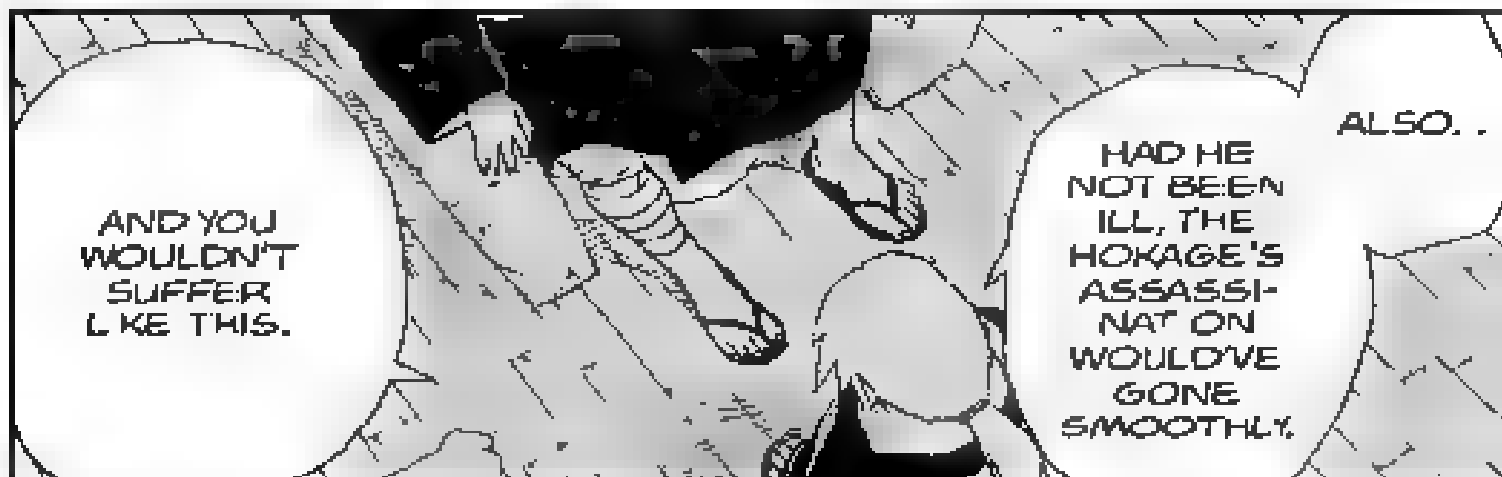
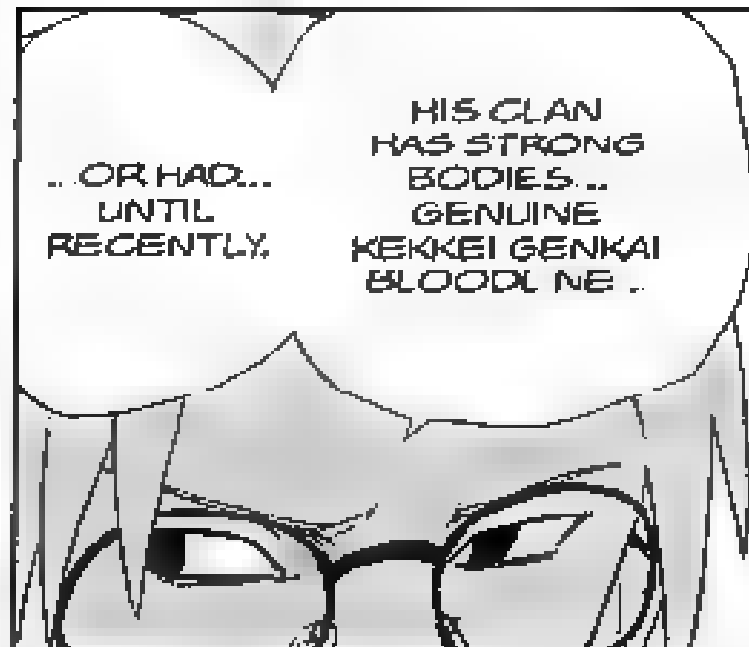
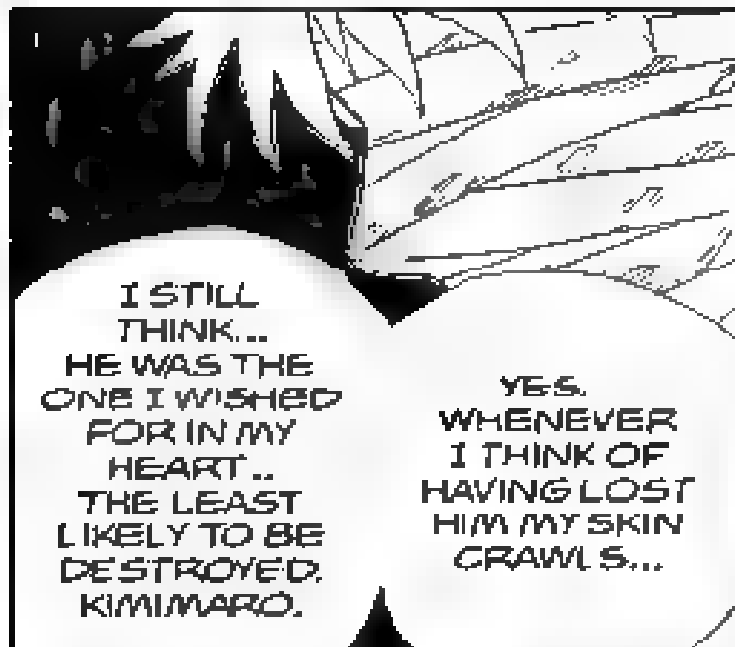


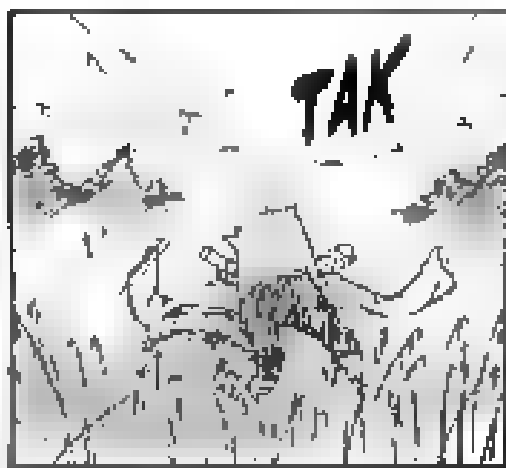
A black and white manga panel showing a close-up of Kimimaro. He has short, light-colored hair and is wearing round glasses and a dark, high-collared garment. He has a serious expression. Three speech bubbles are present: one on the left, one in the center, and one on the right.

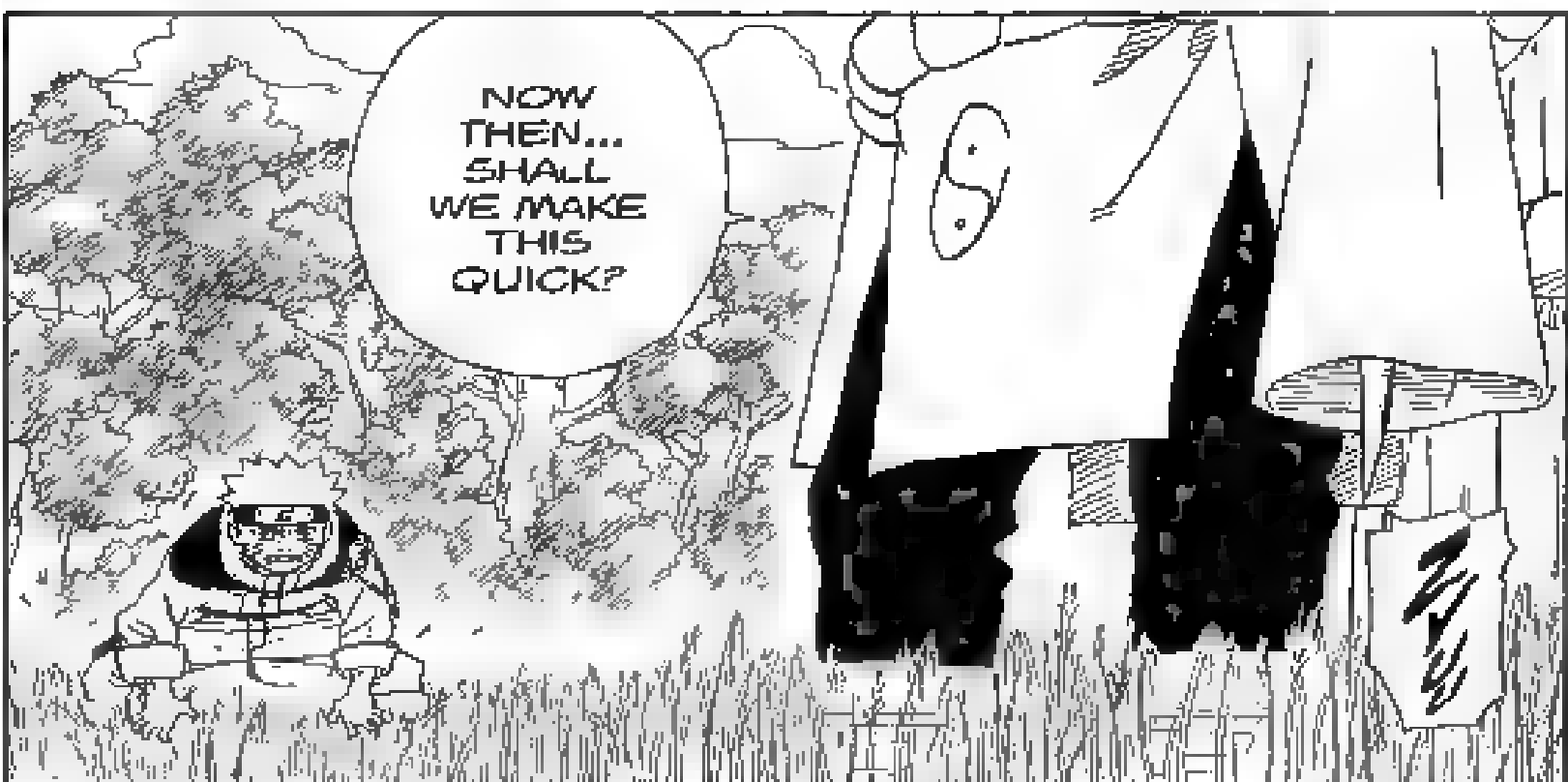
HIS
THOUGHTS
IMMERSED
IN DARKNESS,
JUST LIKE
YOURS...

AND HE
DEIFIED YOU,
WORSHIPPED
AND ADORED
YOU

LORD
OROCHI-
MARU ..
KIMIMARO
WAS
PERFECT.





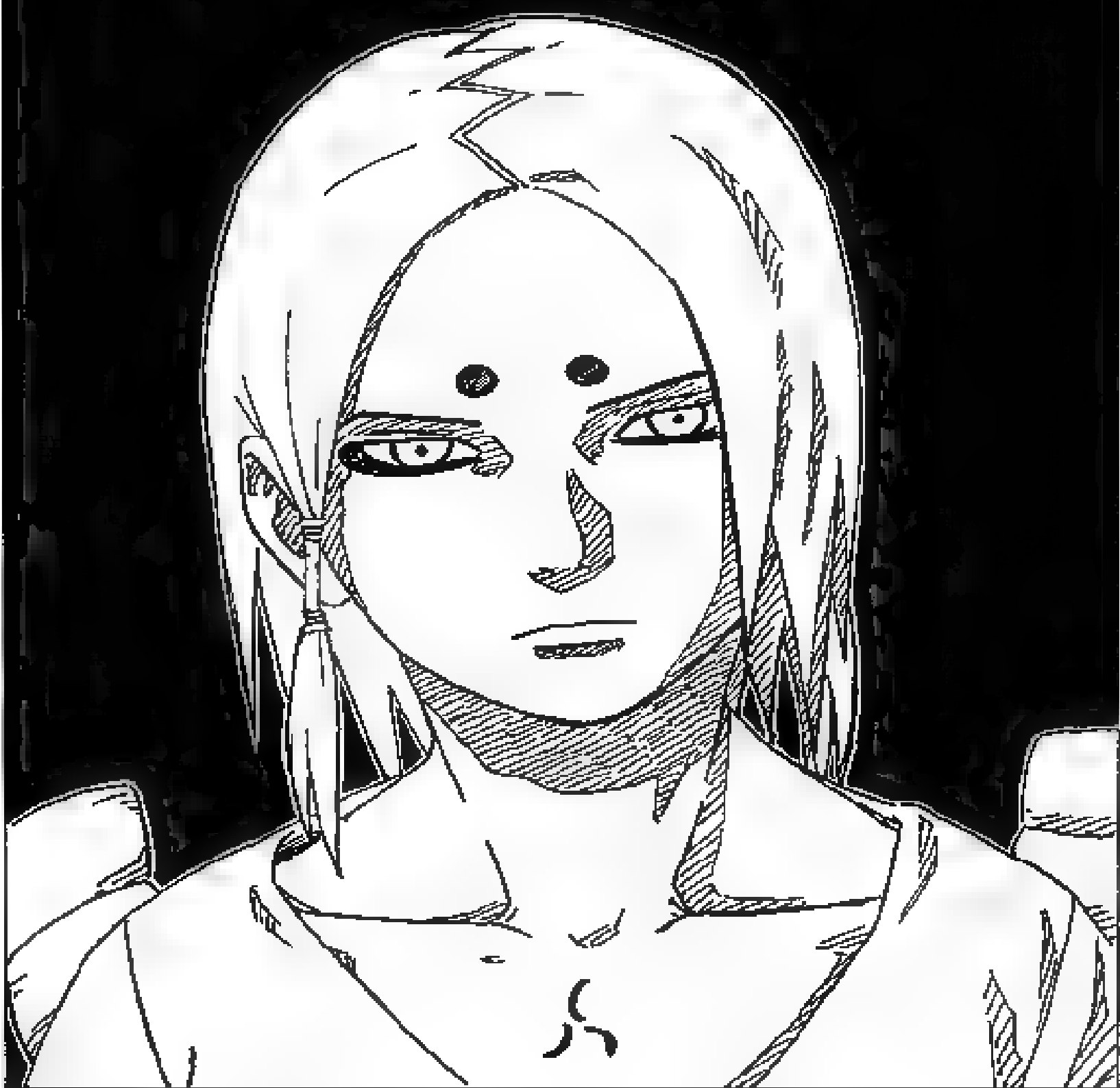


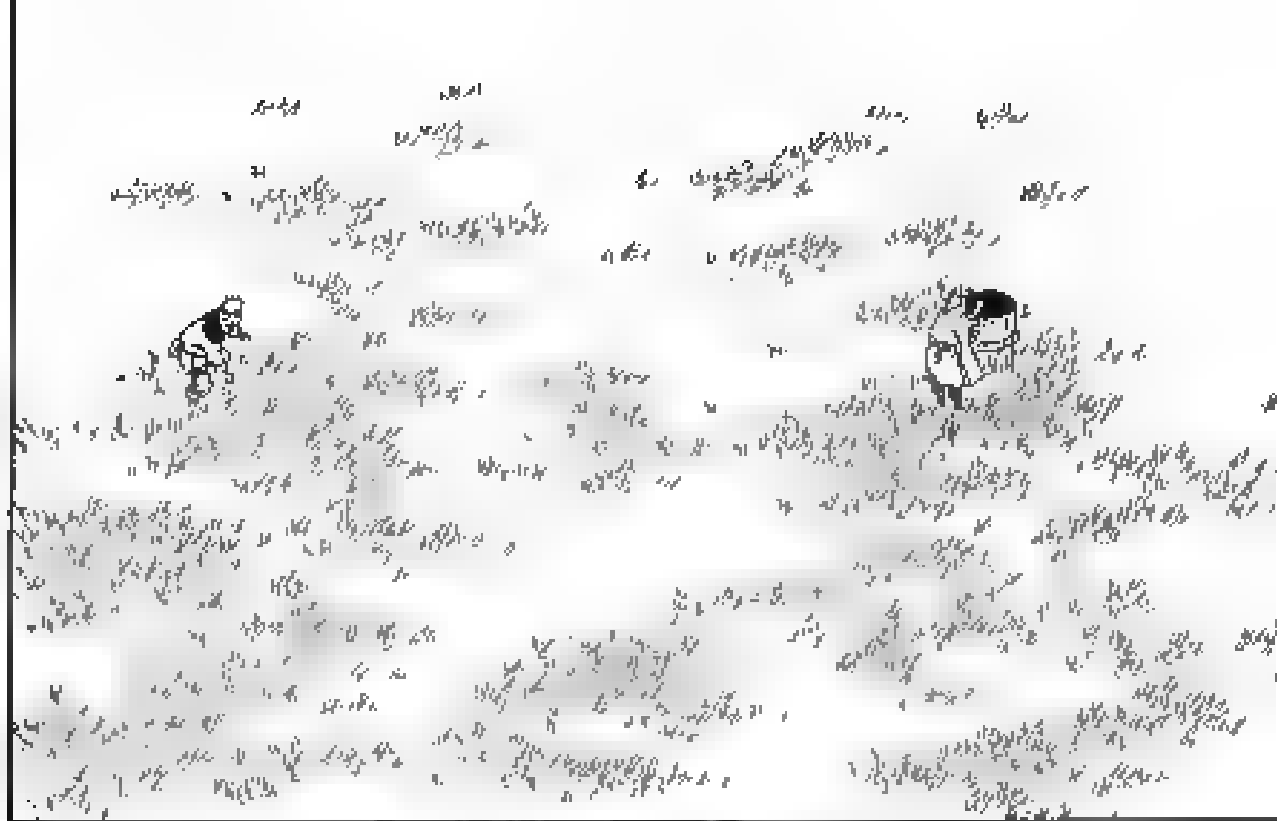
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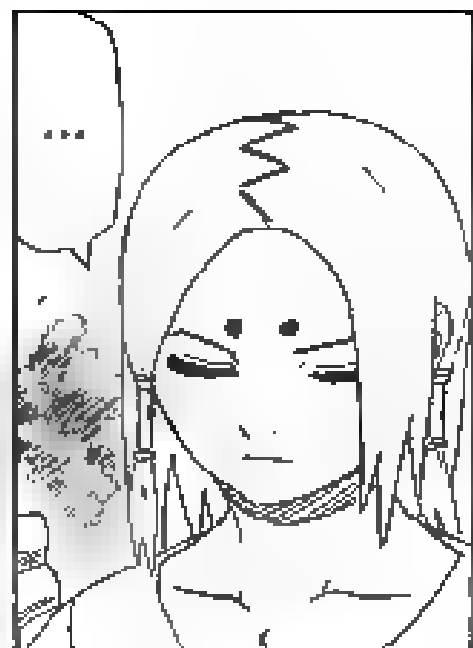
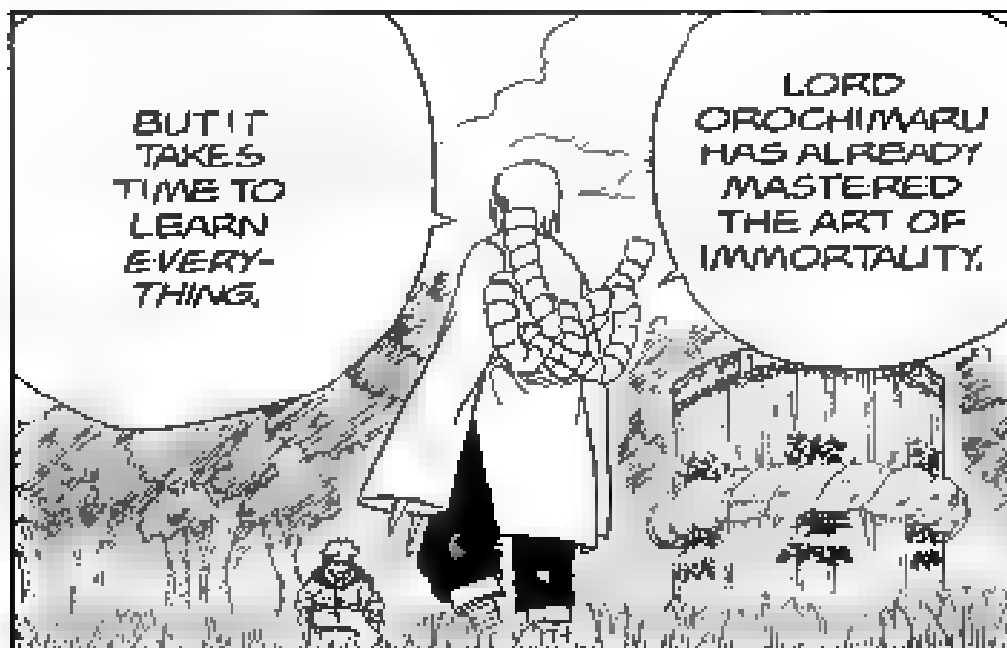
TM



Number 202: Three Wishes!!







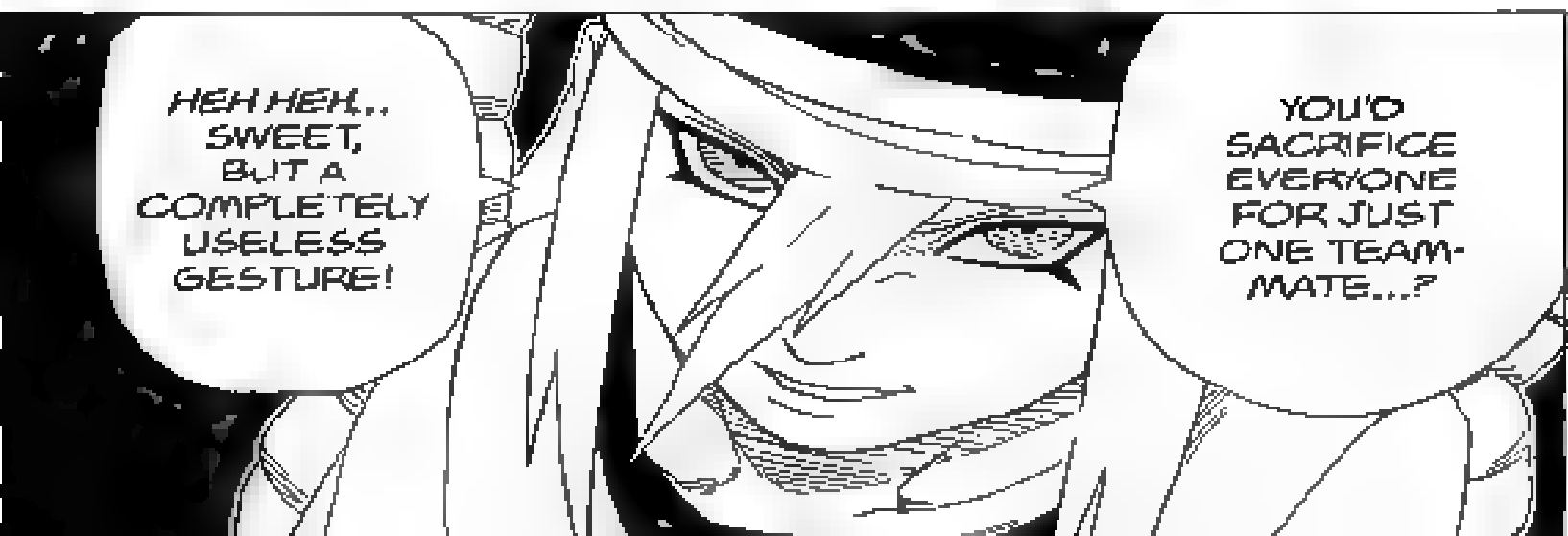
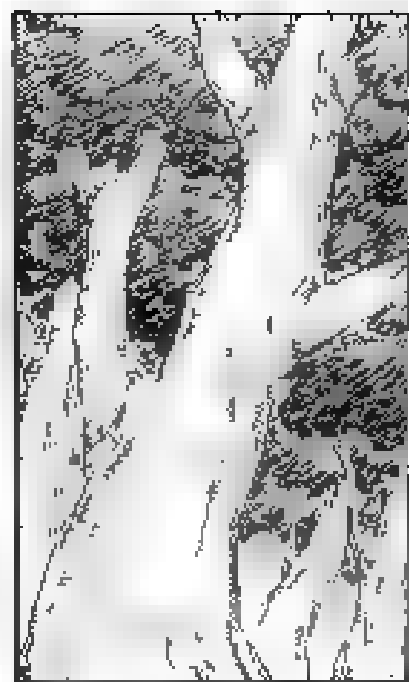


I WON'T
LET THAT
HAPPEN...



YES...

PRECISELY
...





HAH...



...



...

I WAS TOO
WORRIED
ABOUT LOSING
SOMEONE...

I WASN'T
SURE IF
I'D MADE
THE RIGHT
DECISION.

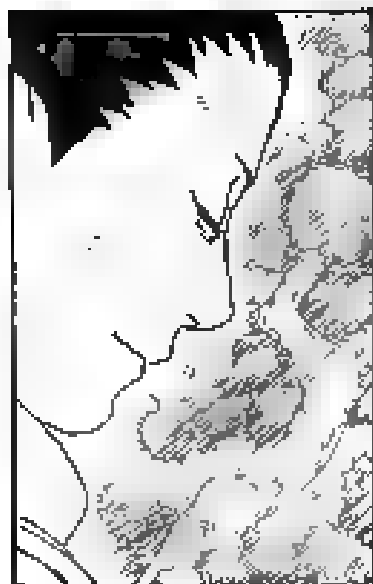
THIS IS
MY FIRST
TIME OUT AS
THE
LEADER..



I SHOULD'VE
PLACED MORE
VALUE ON THE
LIVES OF MY
TEAMMATES
INSTEAD OF
ONE PERSON
ABDUCTED BY
THE ENEMY.

THE RIGHT
THING TO DO
WOULD'VE
BEEN TO
ABORT THIS
RECKLESS
MISSION,

AS
LEADER,
MY
TEAMMATES'
LIVES ARE
IN MY
HANDS..



THINGS
DON'T
ALWAYS
WORK
BY THE
BOOK
IN THIS
WORLD.



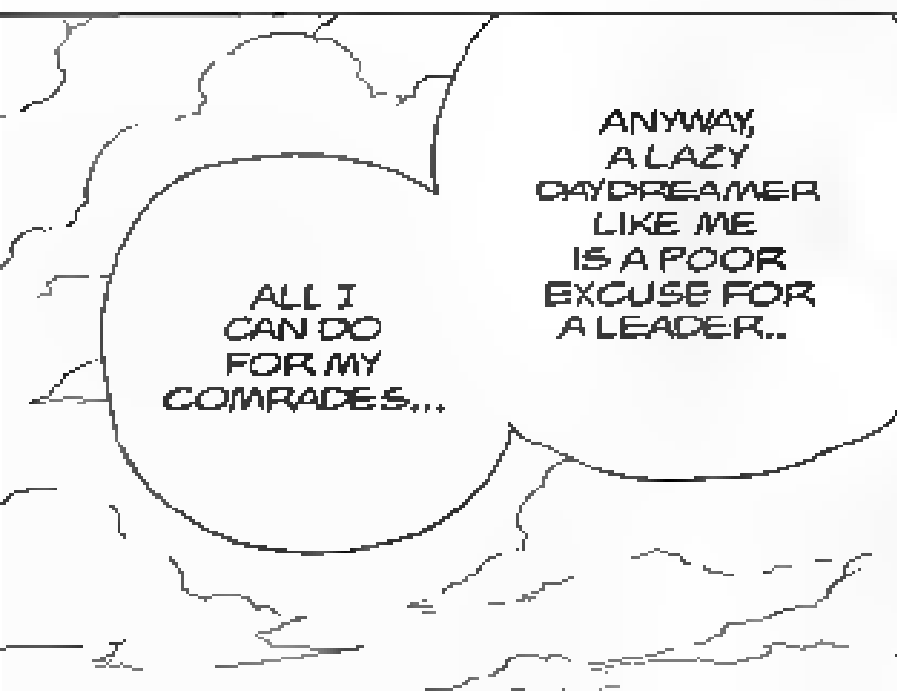
THEN,
WHY
DIDN'T
YOU?



THERE'S
NO ONE IN
MY SQUAD
LIKE THAT.

BESIDES,
ABANDONING
A TEAMMATE...

.. TO PROTECT
YOURSELF.. ?



ALL I
CAN DO
FOR MY
COMRADES...

ANYWAY,
A LAZY
DAYDREAMER
LIKE ME
IS A POOR
EXCUSE FOR
A LEADER..

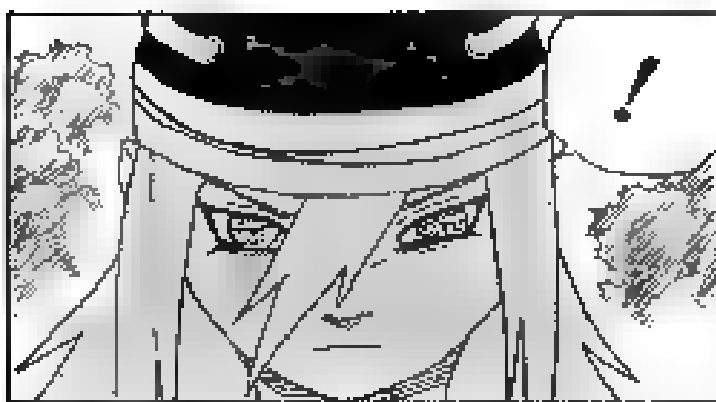


...



NOT
EVEN
ME

...





DON'T
UNDER-
ESTIMATE
MY TEAM.



WHOA!!

CRASH

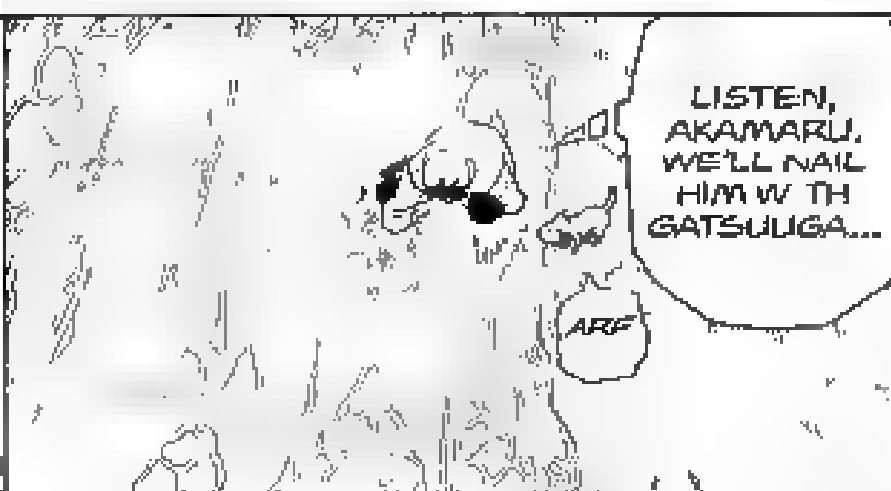
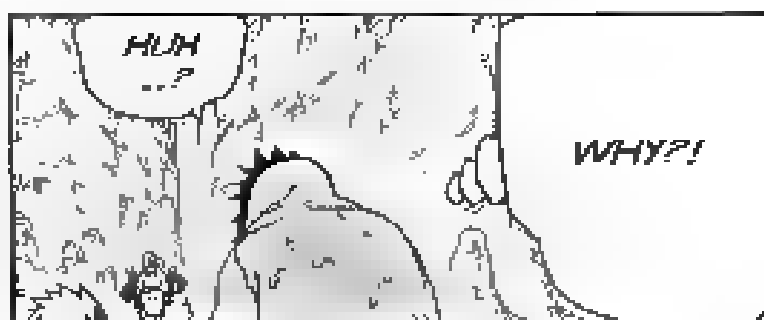
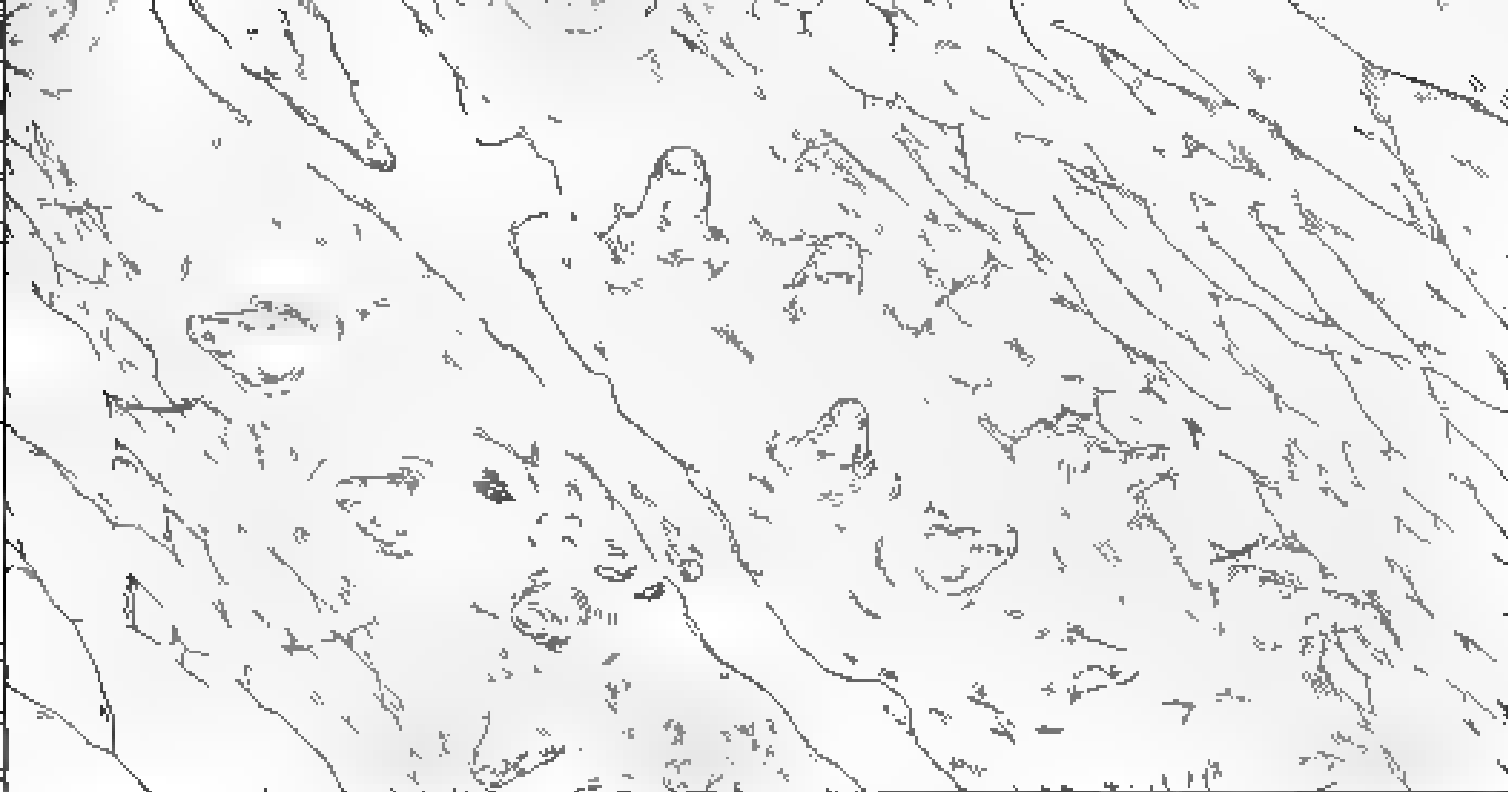
GRN

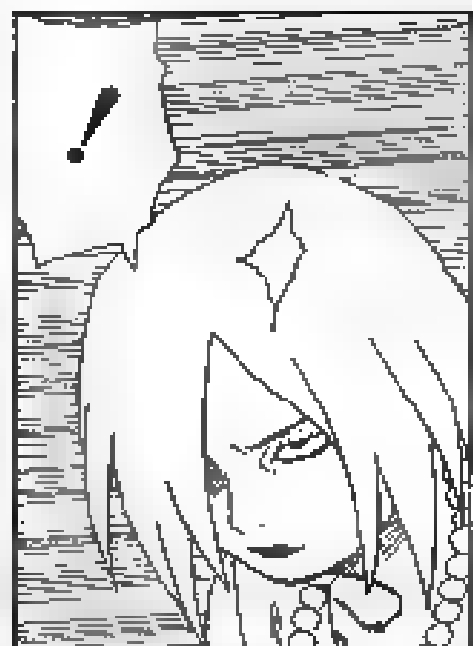


SLOOSH

WOOF
WOOF!

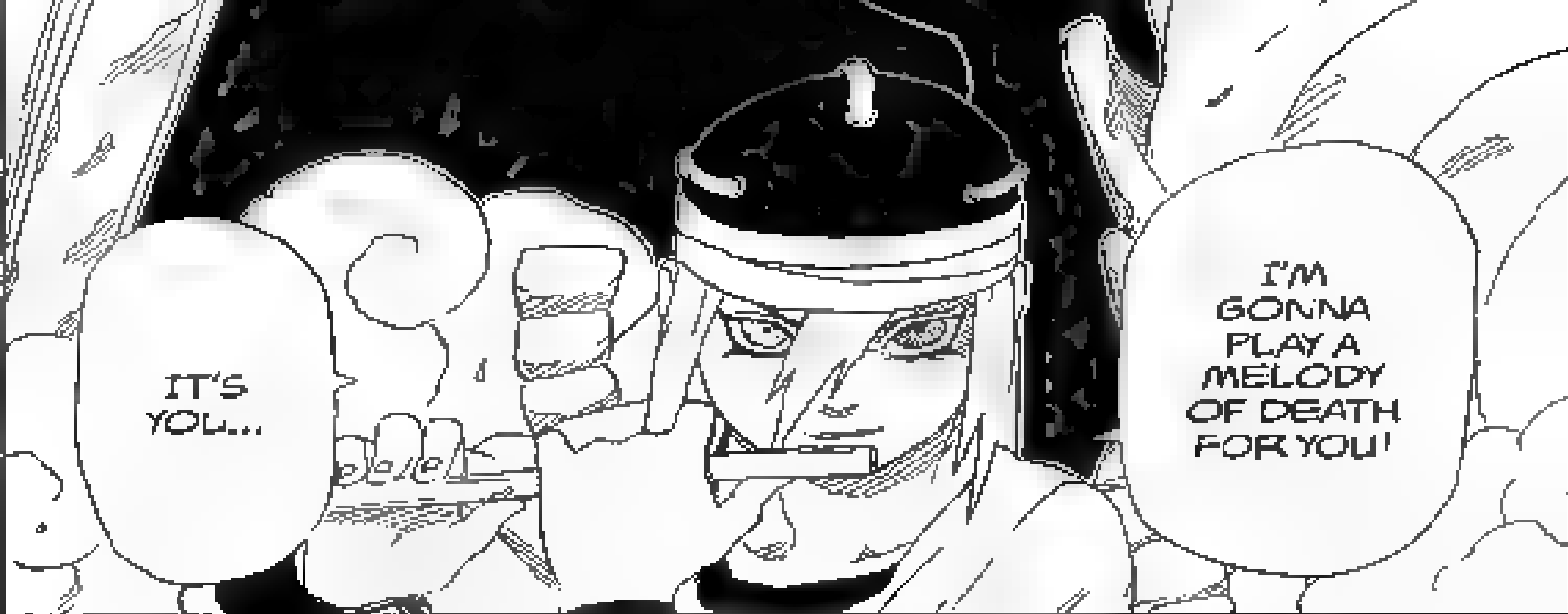
?!











IT'S
YOU...

I'M
GONNA
PLAY A
MELODY
OF DEATH
FOR YOU!



...WHO
SHOULDN'T
UNDER-
ESTIMATE
US!



WHAT
IS THIS
GUY?!

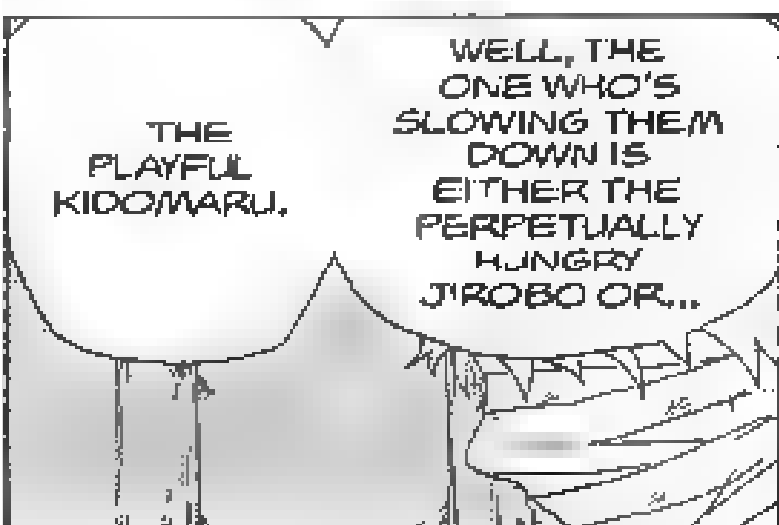
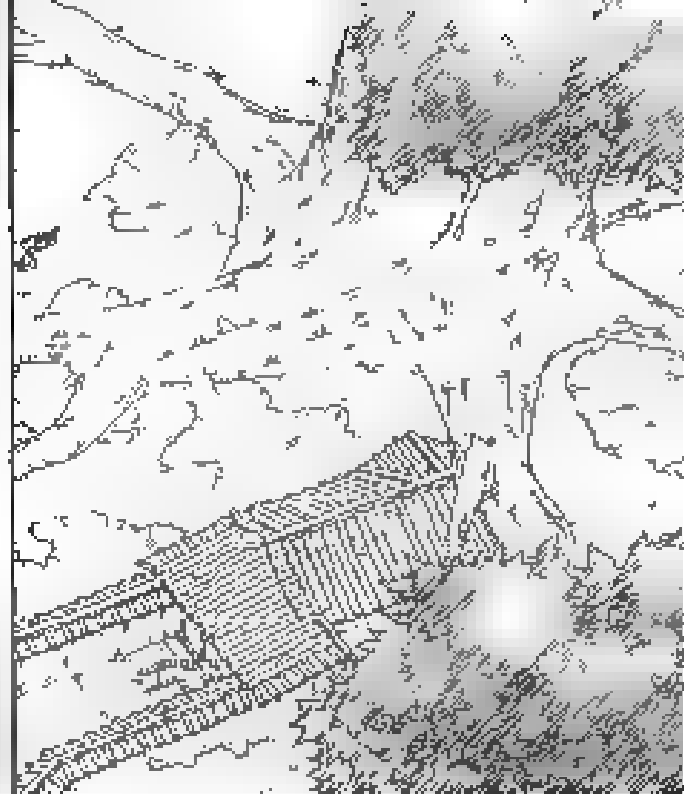




THEY MIGHT'VE SENT PEOPLE CAPABLE OF STOPPING THEM.

OR MAYBE THEY'RE PLAYING AROUND...

BUT... WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT THE SOUND FOUR WOULD TAKE SO LONG...



THE PLAYFUL KIDOMARU,

WELL, THE ONE WHO'S SLOWING THEM DOWN IS EITHER THE PERPETUALLY HUNGRY JIROBO OR...

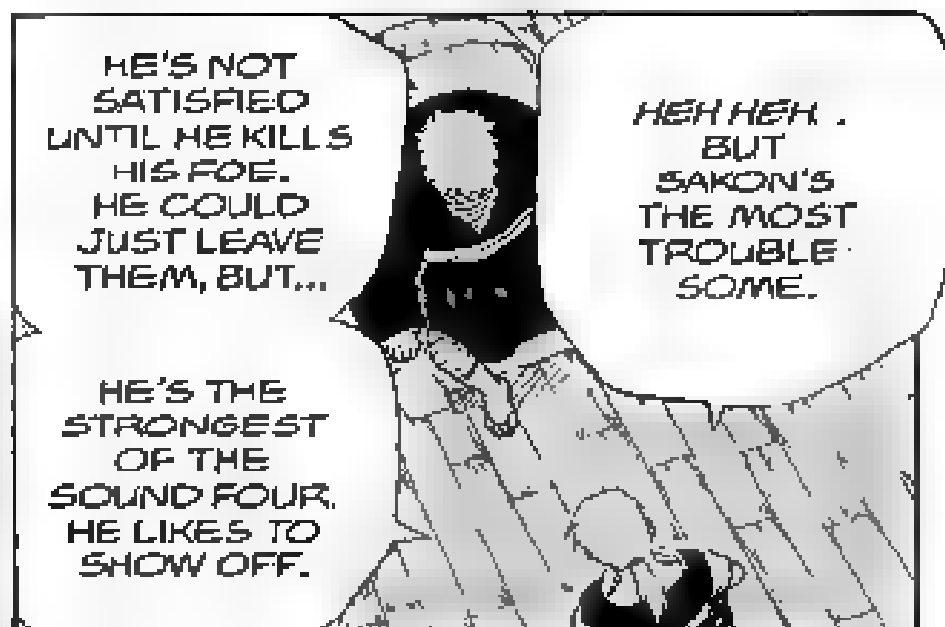


HO HO...



TAYUYA IS NO LESS VAIN.

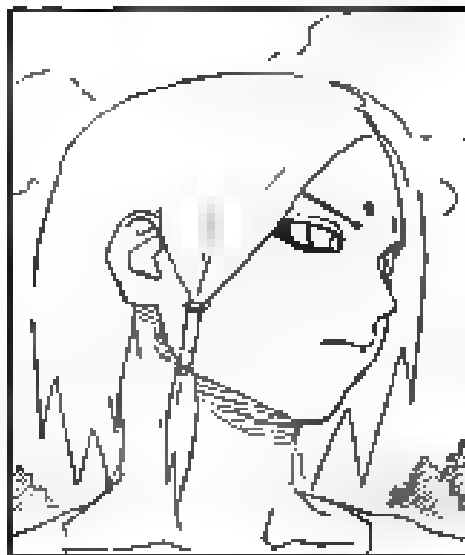
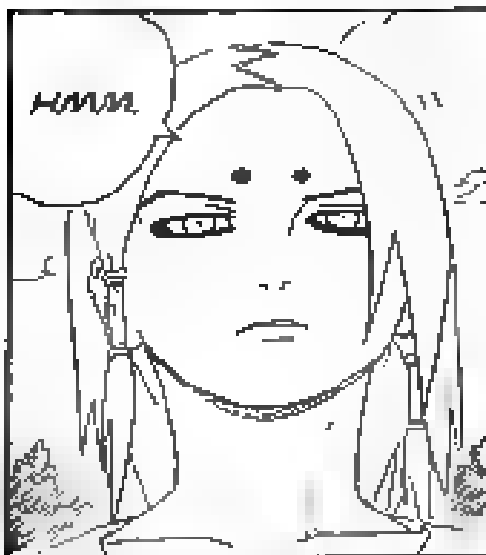
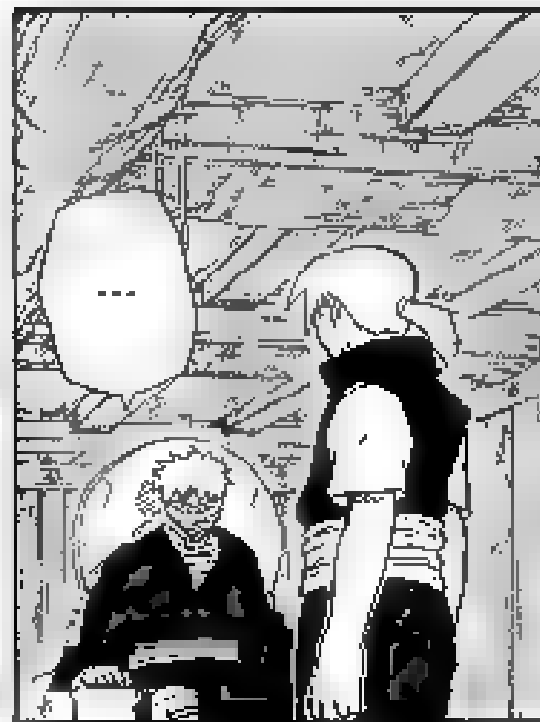
HO HO... WELL...



HE'S NOT SATISFIED UNTIL HE KILLS HIS FOE. HE COULD JUST LEAVE THEM, BUT...

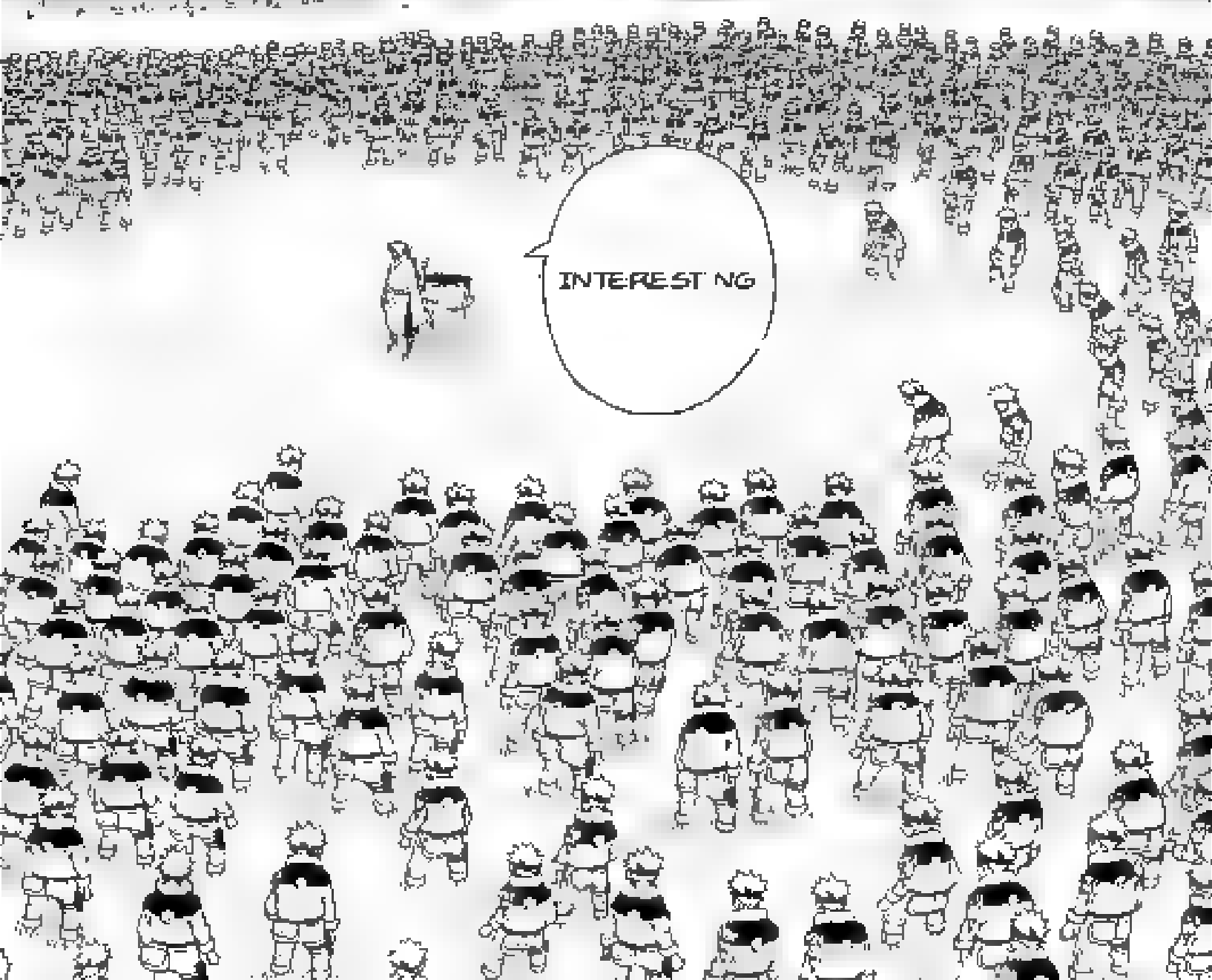
HE'S THE STRONGEST OF THE SOUND FOUR. HE LIKES TO SHOW OFF.

HEH HEH... BUT SAKON'S THE MOST TROUBLE SOME.



OWN

WINING



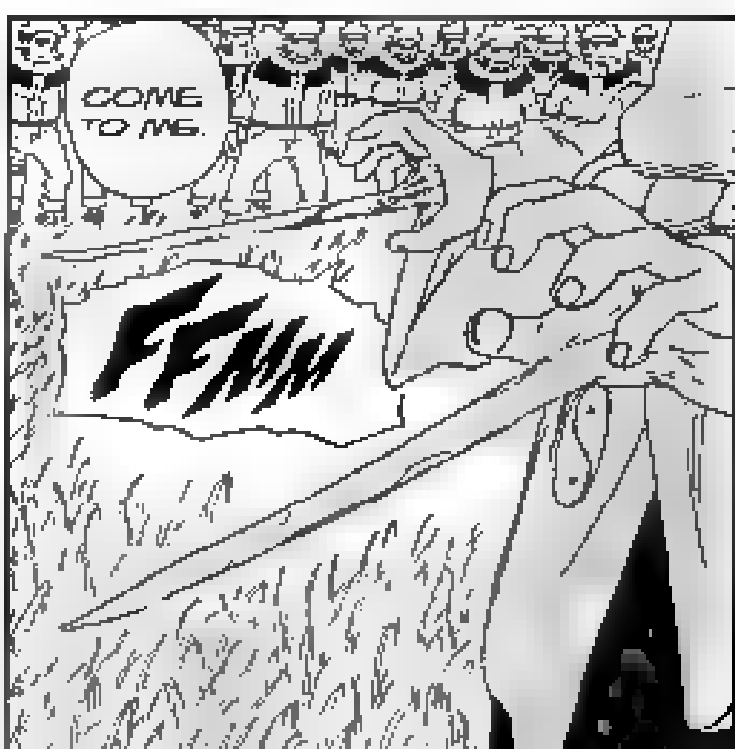
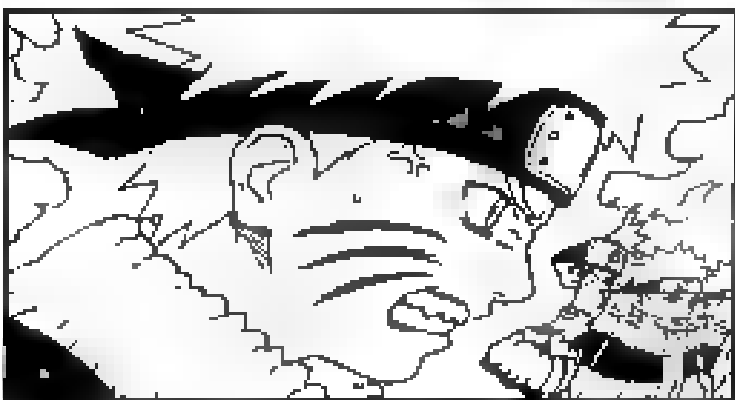
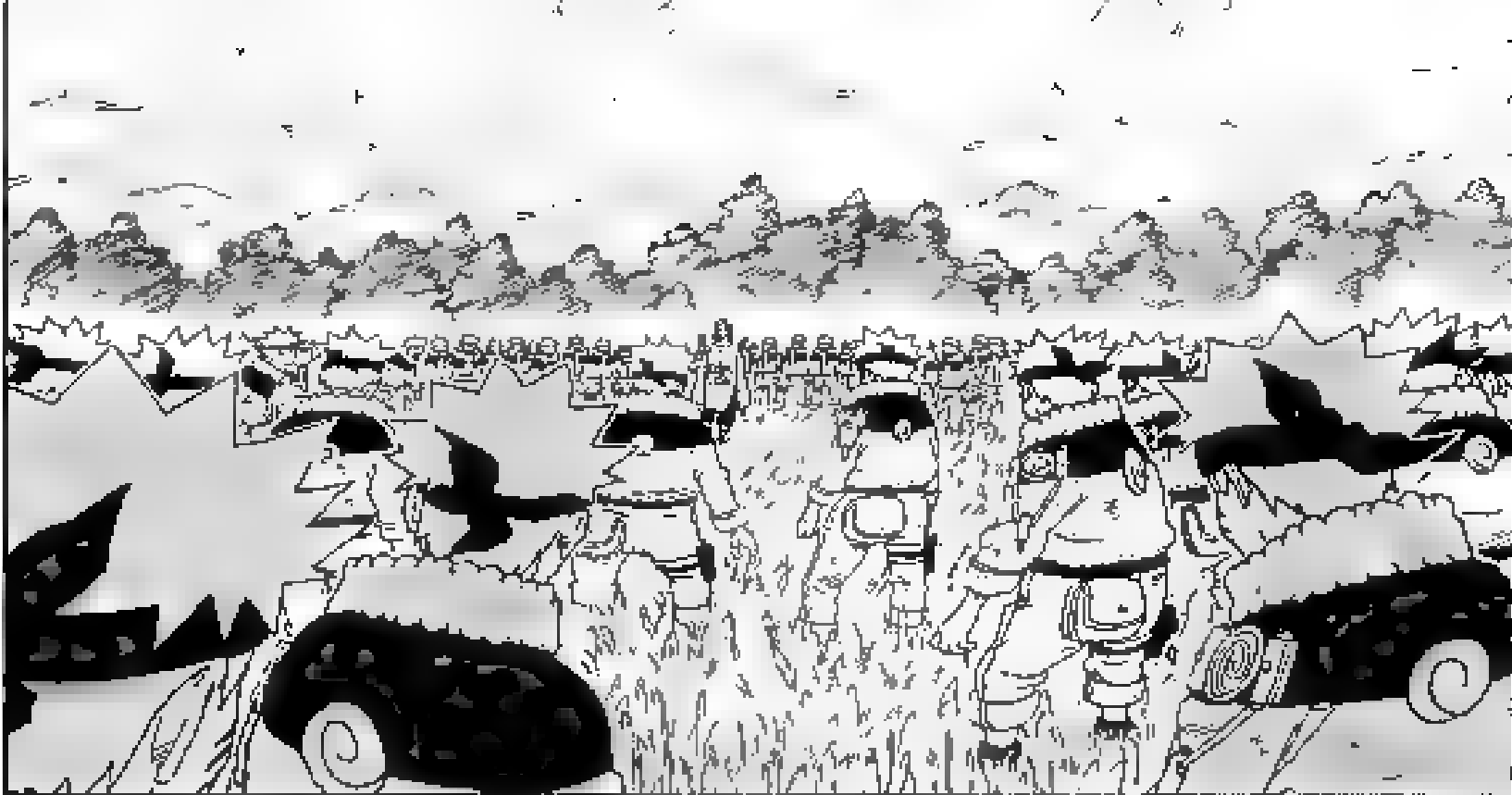
NO

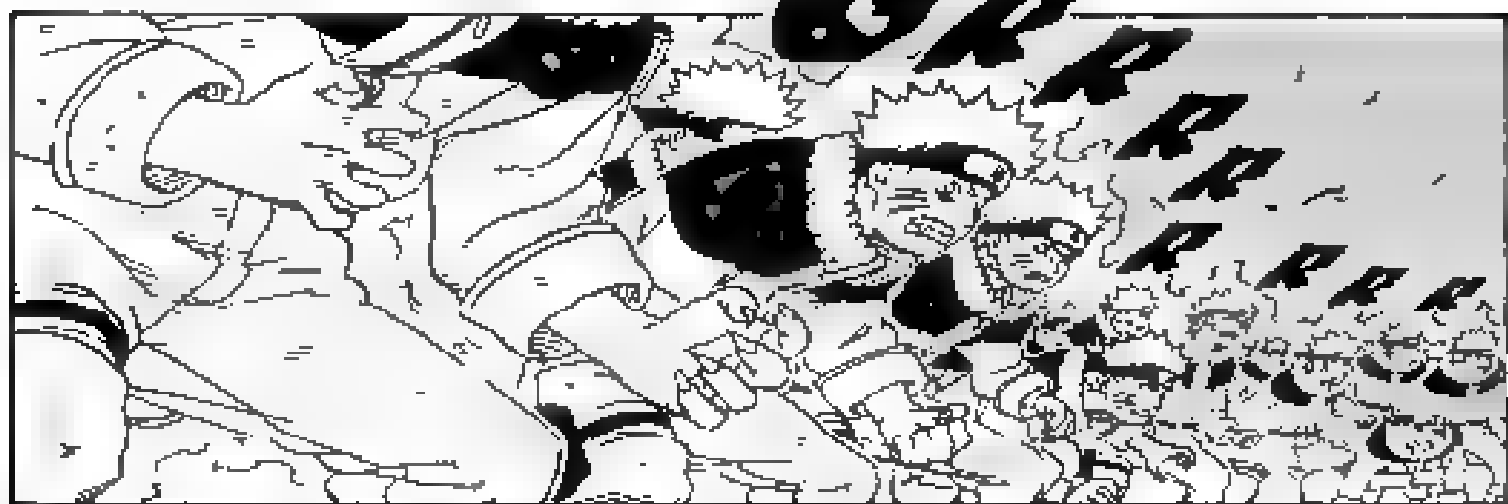
TM

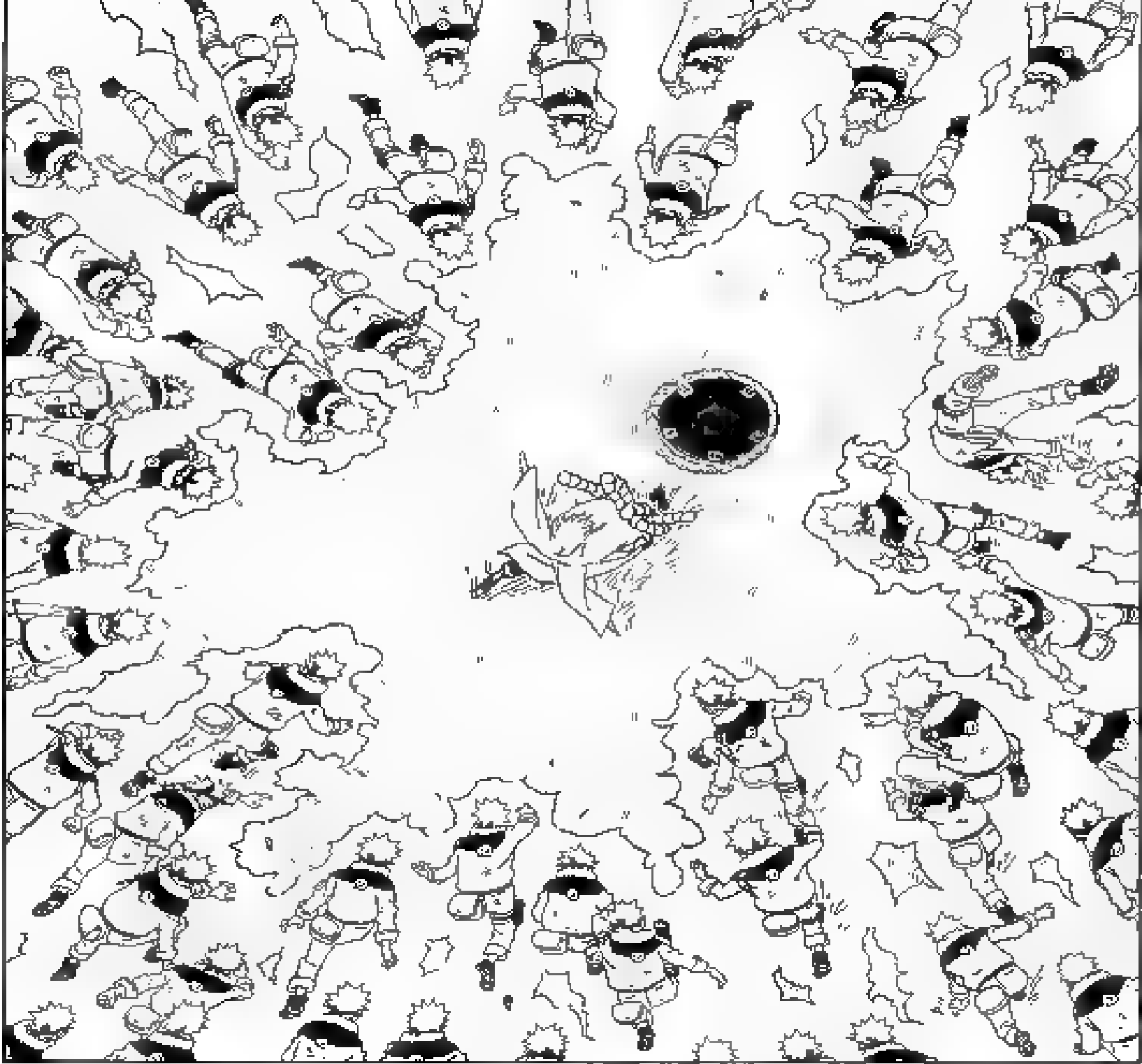


Number 203: Sakon's Secret





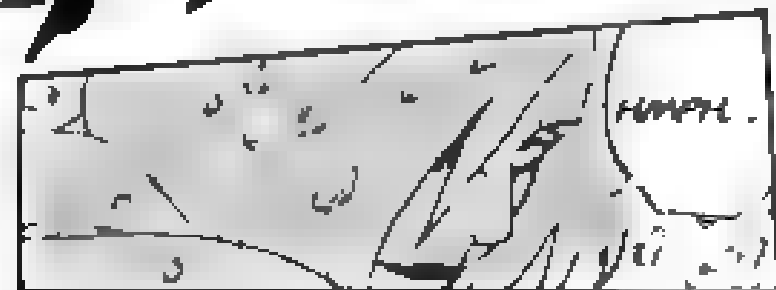


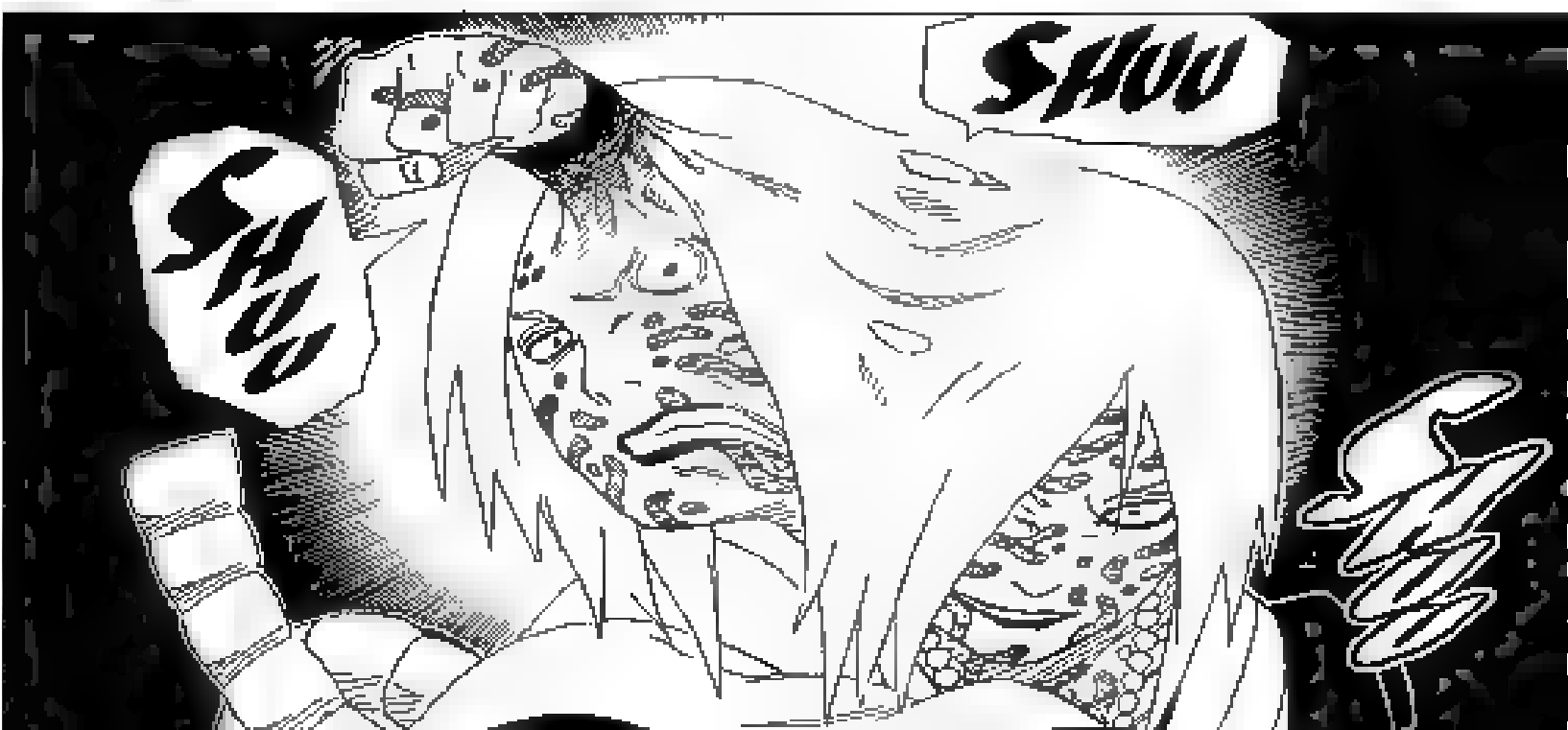
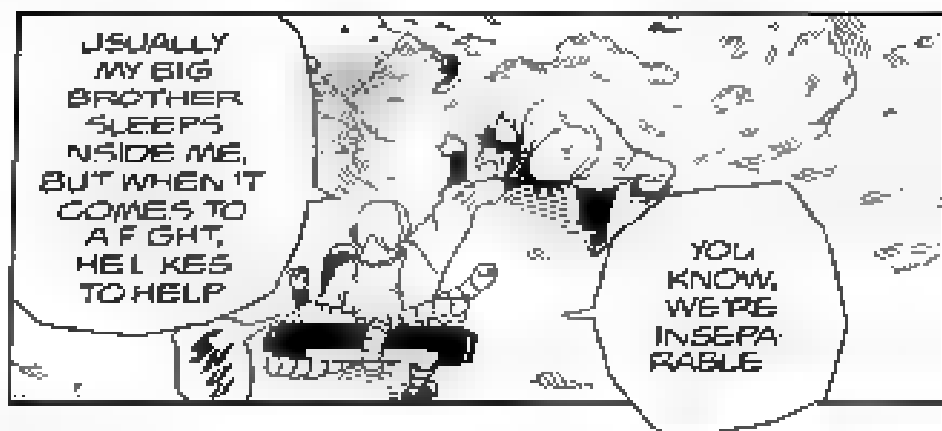


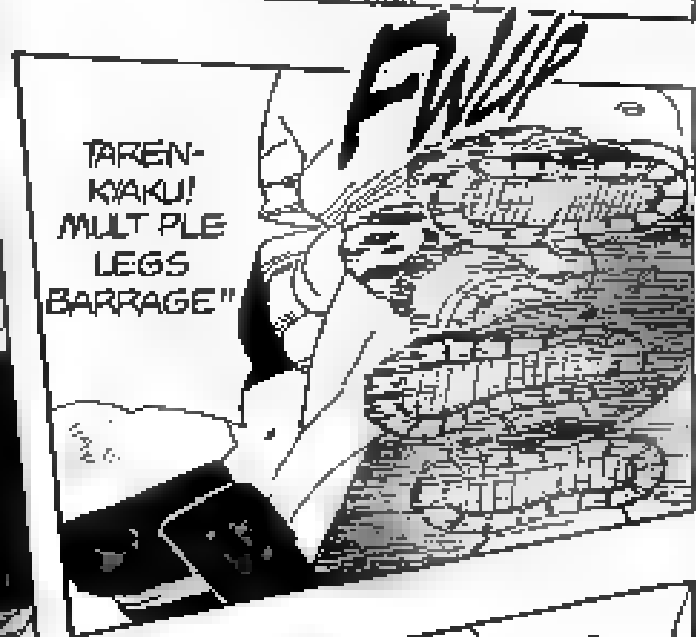
TARENKENI
MULTIPLE
FISTS
BARRAGE!!

SWH

PSH



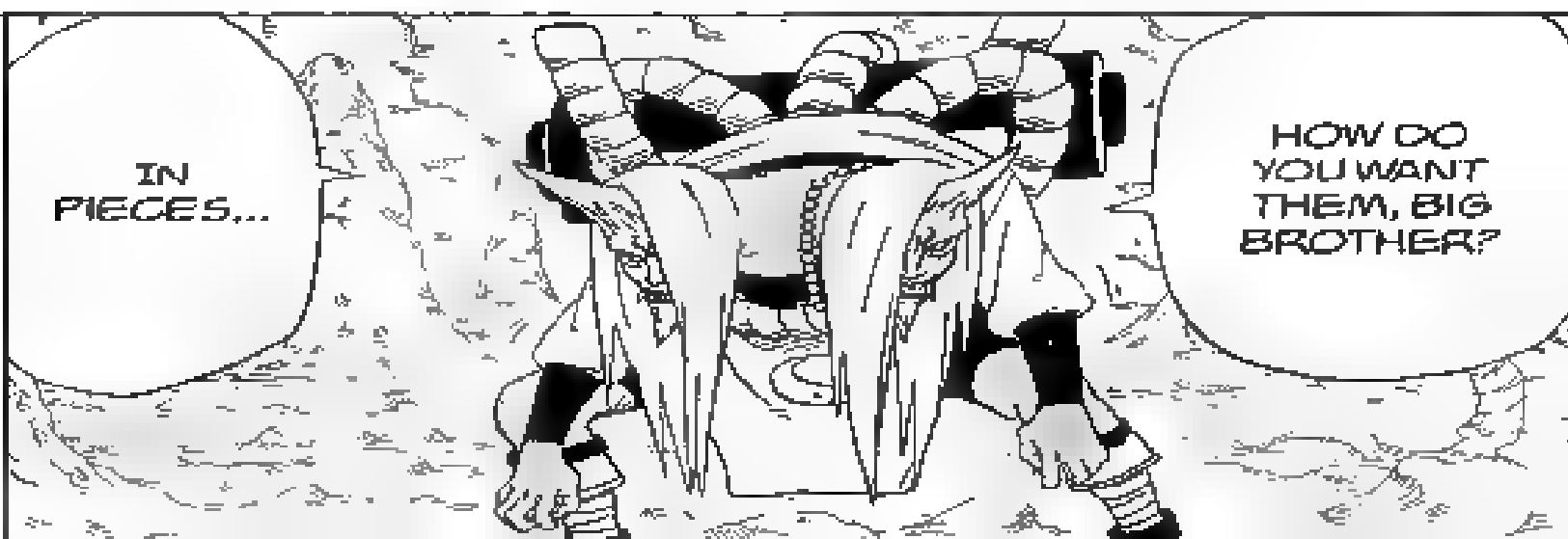




ACTIVATE
SECOND
STATE!!

THEY
ALL DIE
NOW!



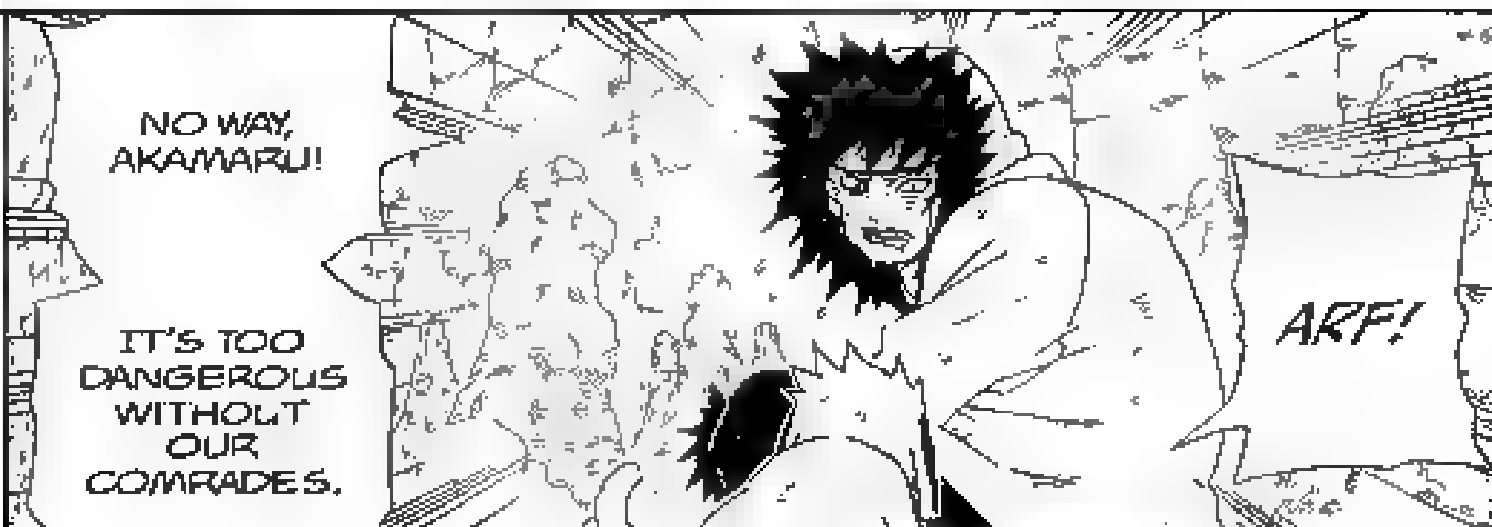




YOU
WANNA
DO
THAT?!



WOOF
WOOF!!



NO WAY,
AKAMARU!

IT'S TOO
DANGEROUS
WITHOUT
OUR
COMRADES.

ARF!



OUCH
...!



WE'LL
DIE
HERE ..

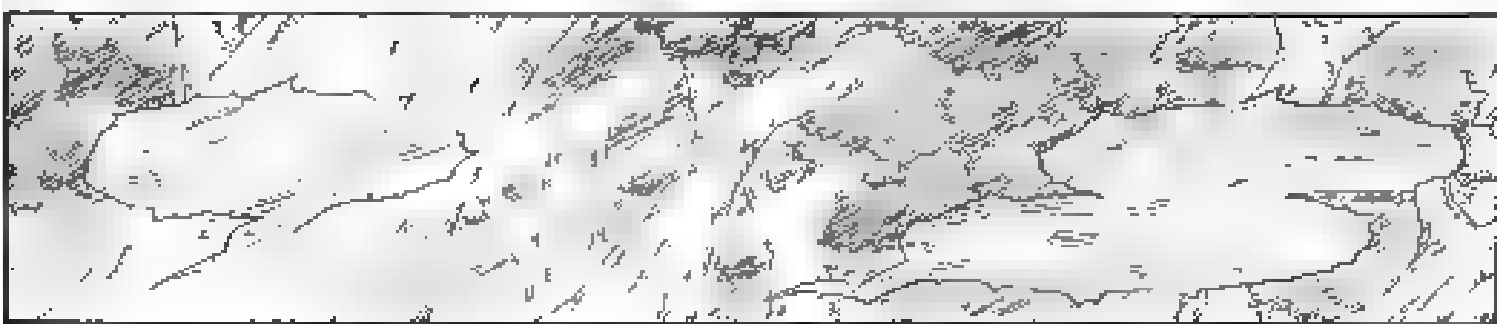
IF WE
MESS
UP...



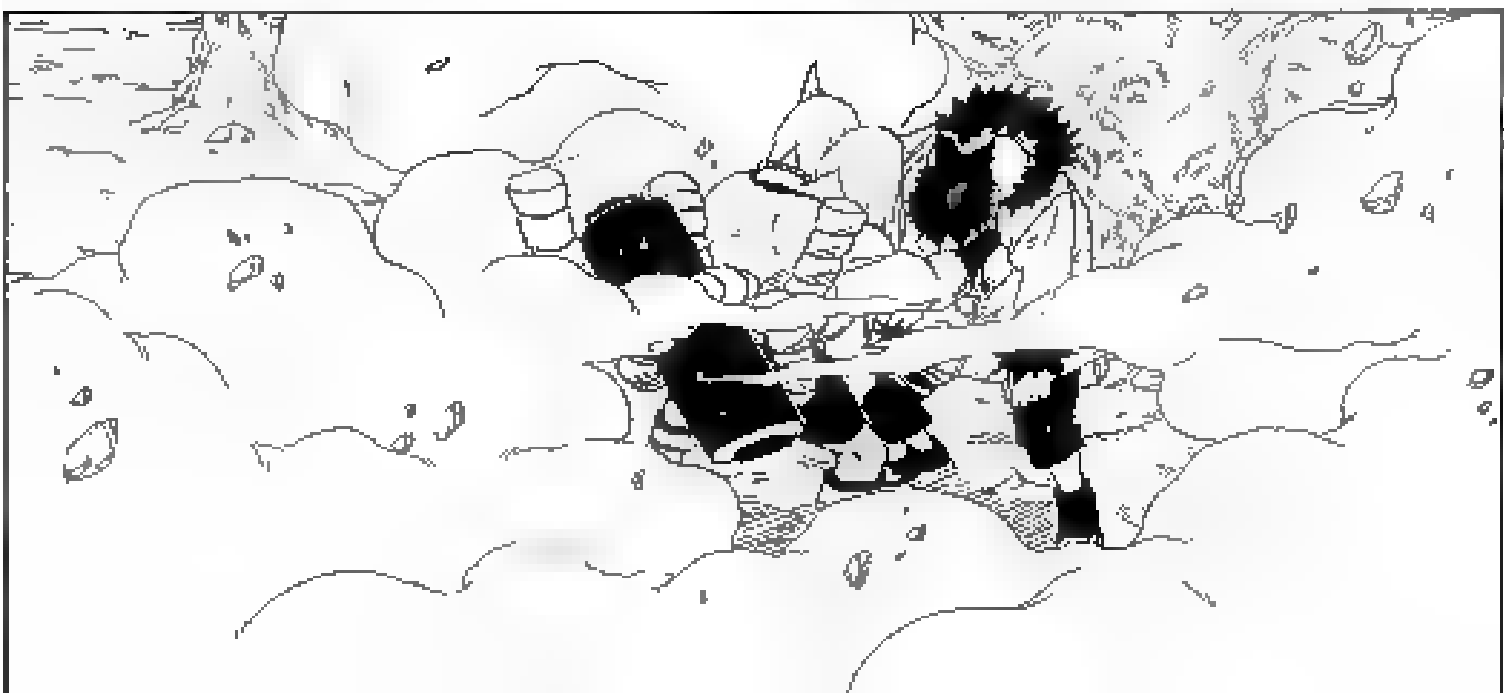
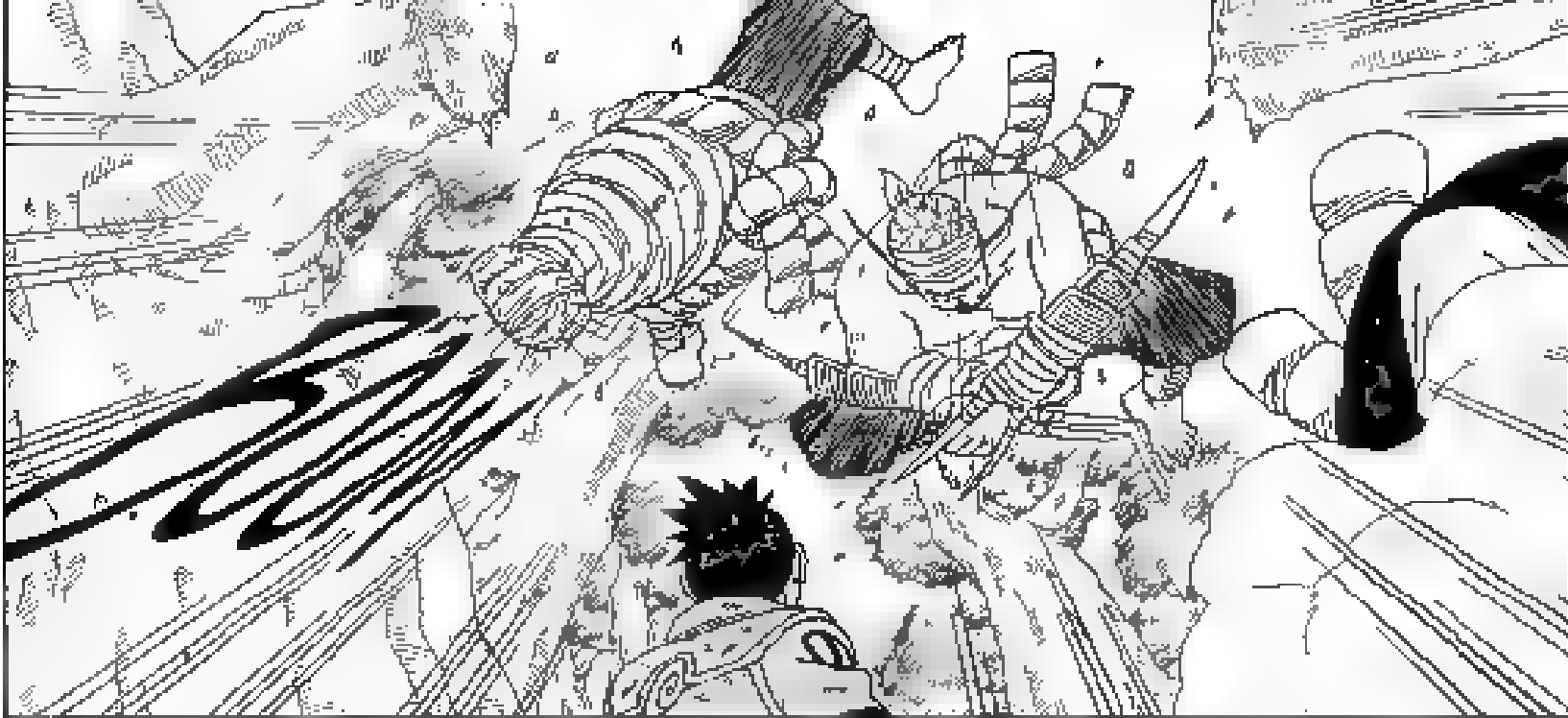
YOU
KNOW
IF WE
USE THAT
JUTSU,
BOTH
OF US...

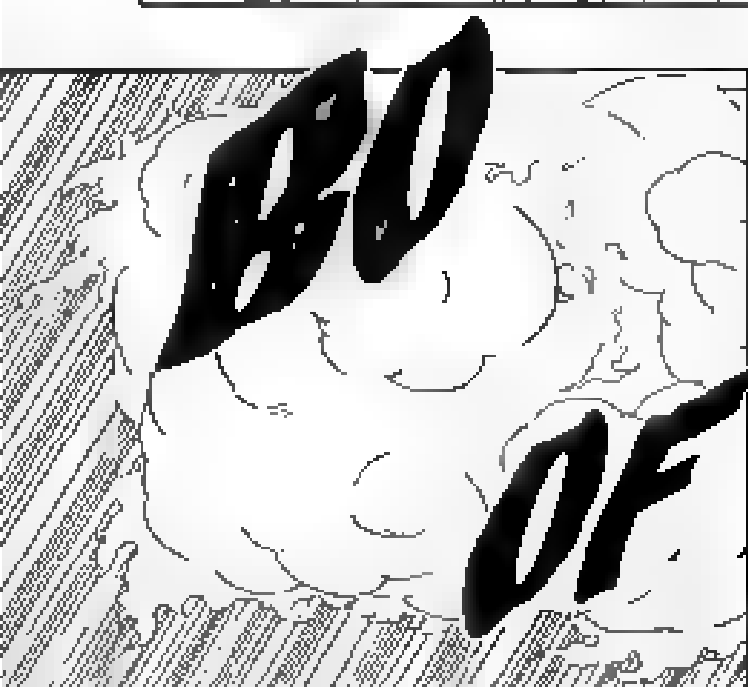
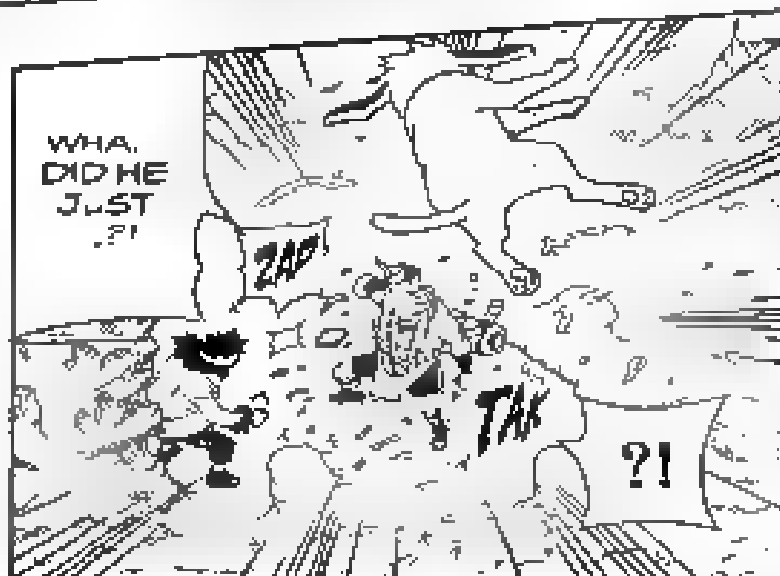
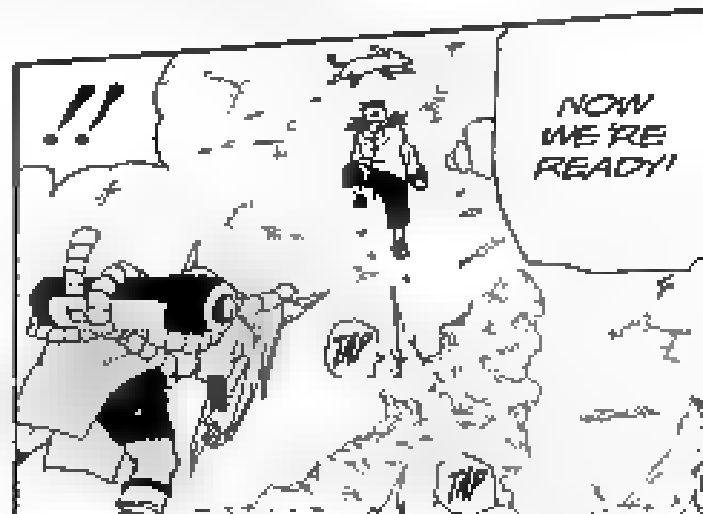
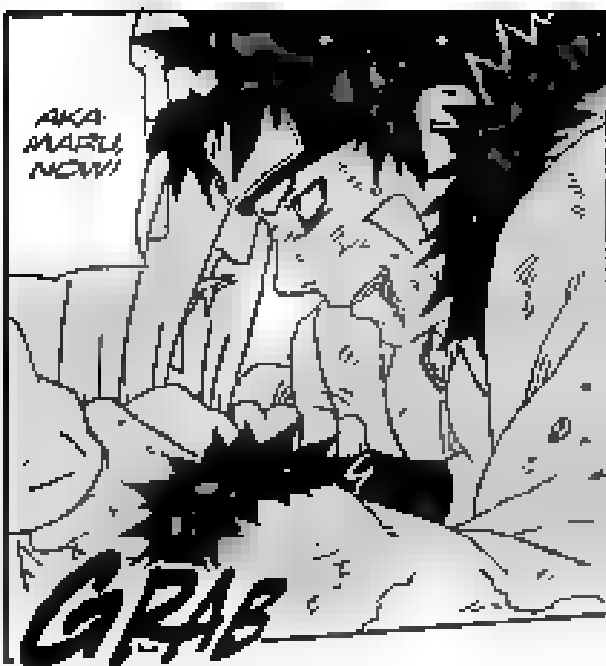
...OUR
CHAKRA
WILL RUN
OUT AND
WE WON'T
BE ABLE
TO MOVE
ANYMORE.

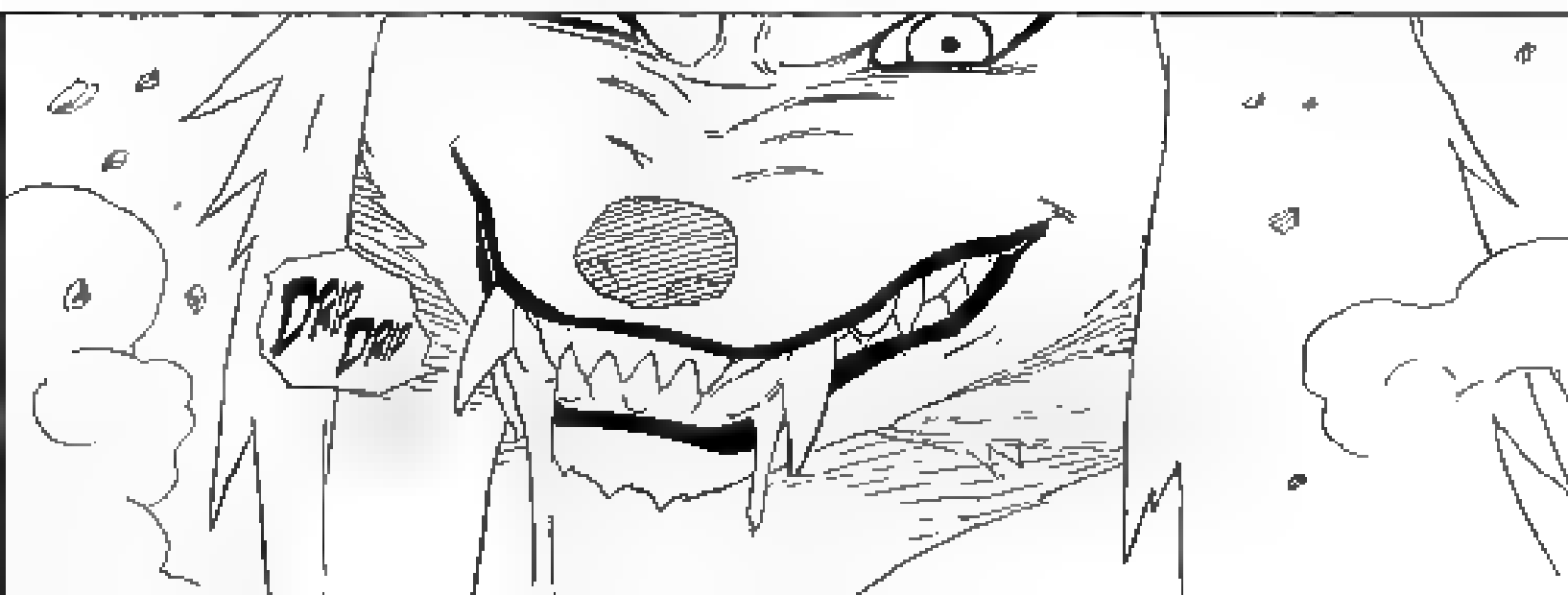


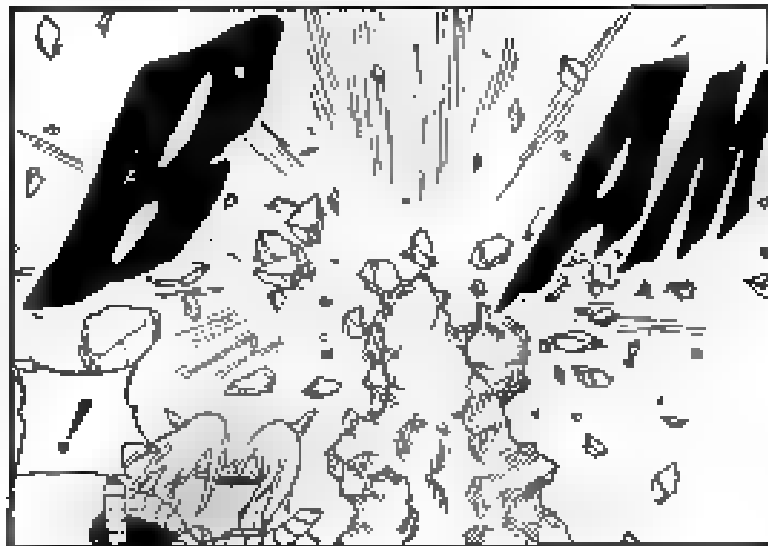


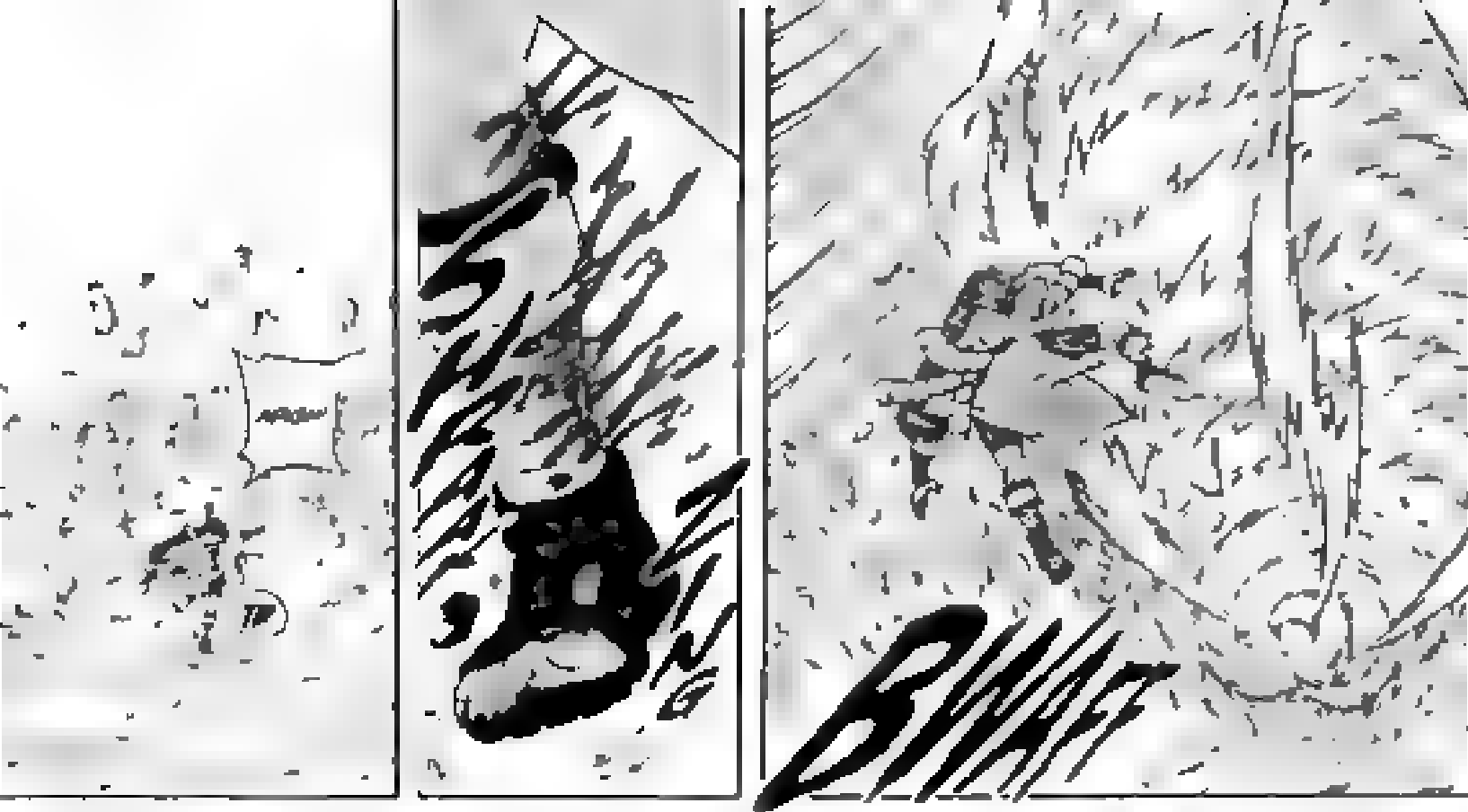












?!!

*@&%...

SAKON,
WHAT'RE
YOU
DOING?
ON THE
RIGHT!!

DROOL
?!

!

SLIP

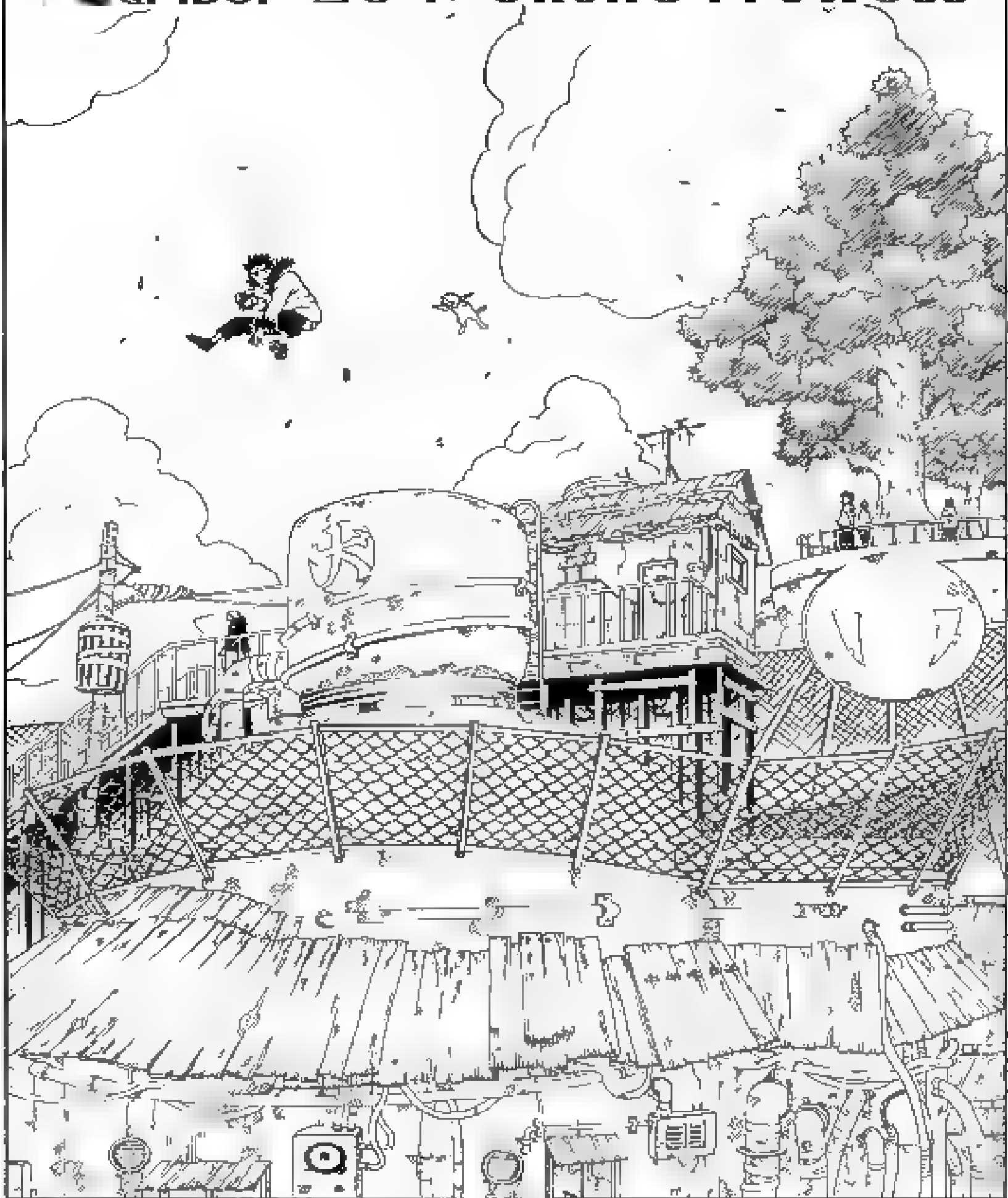
THUD

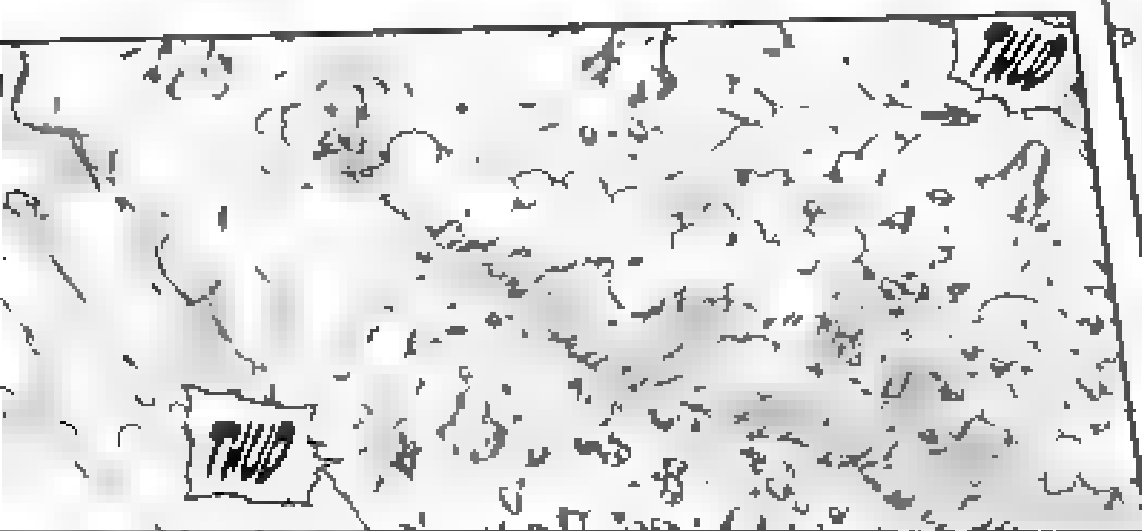
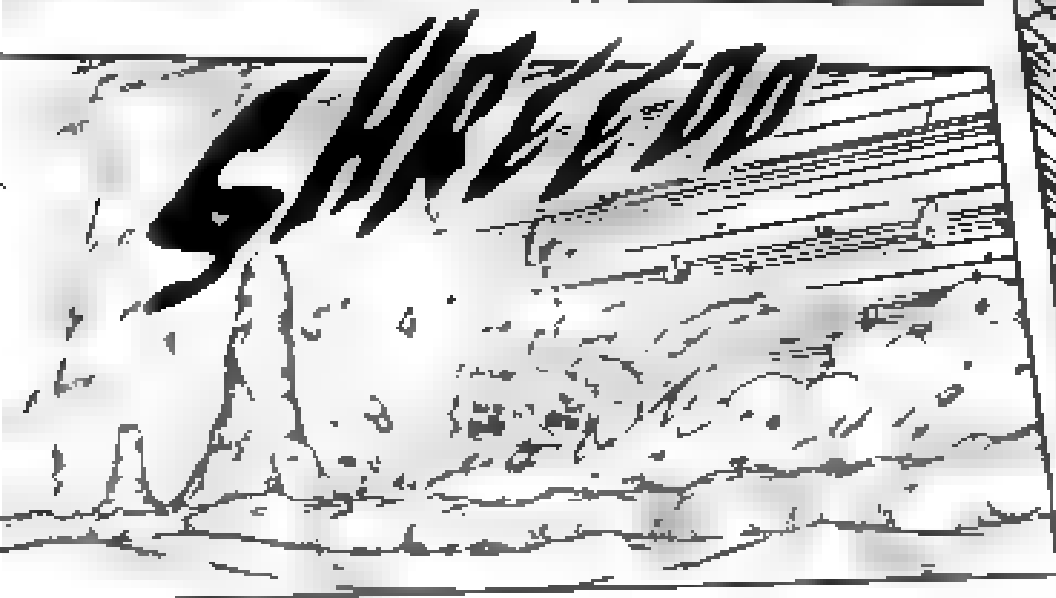
NO

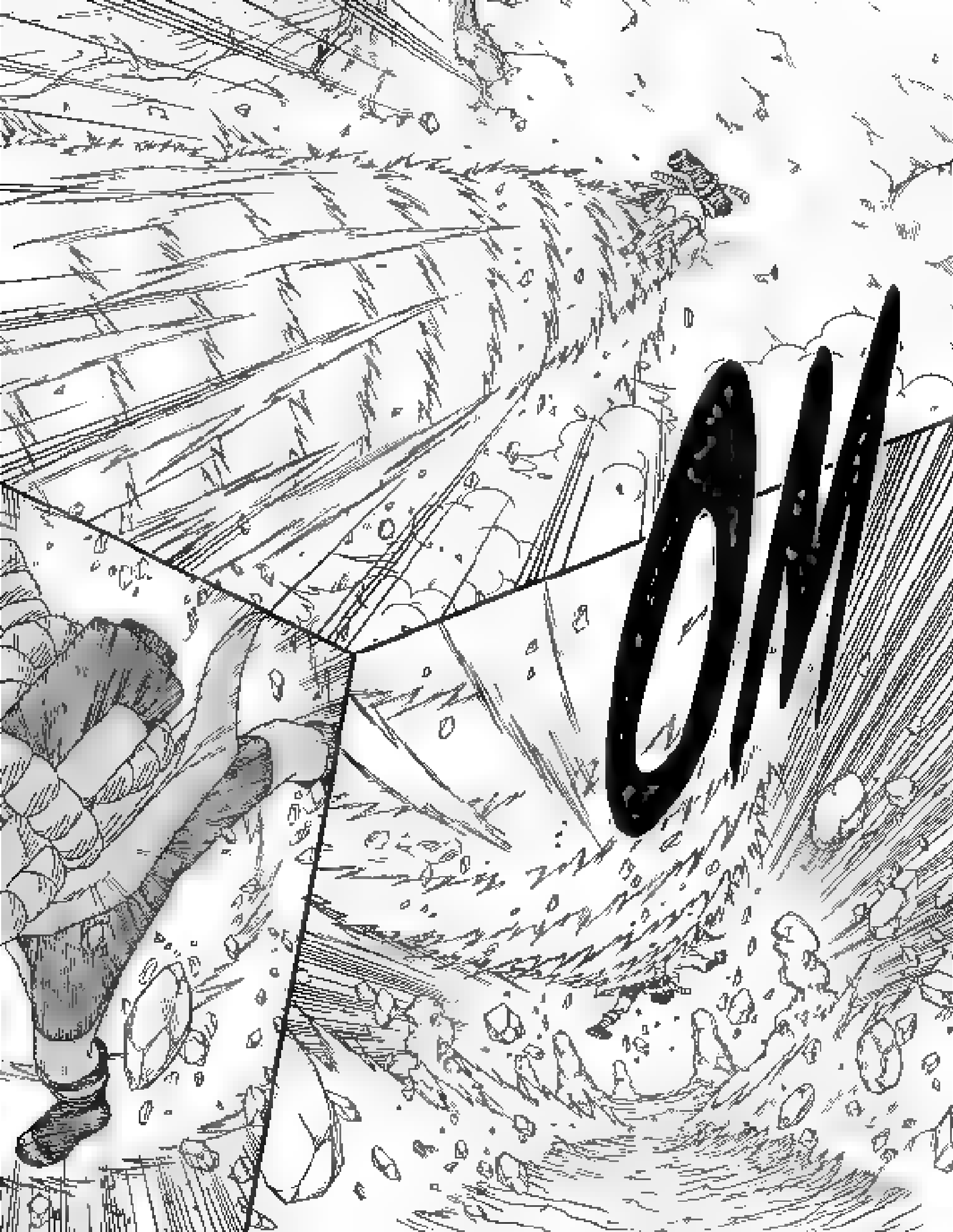
TM

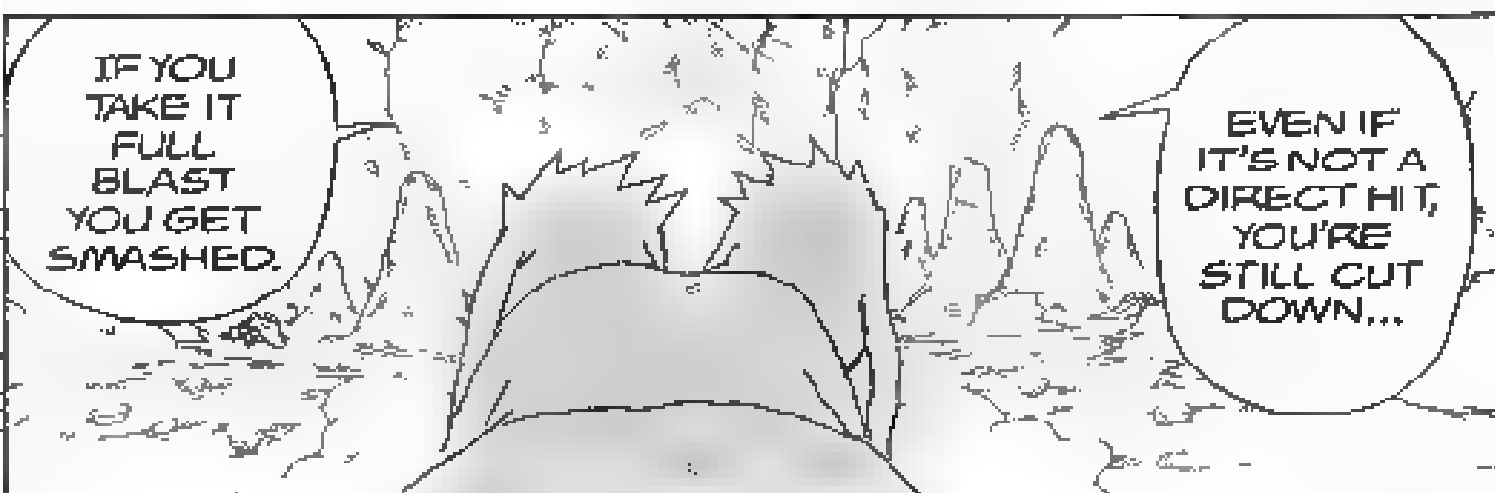
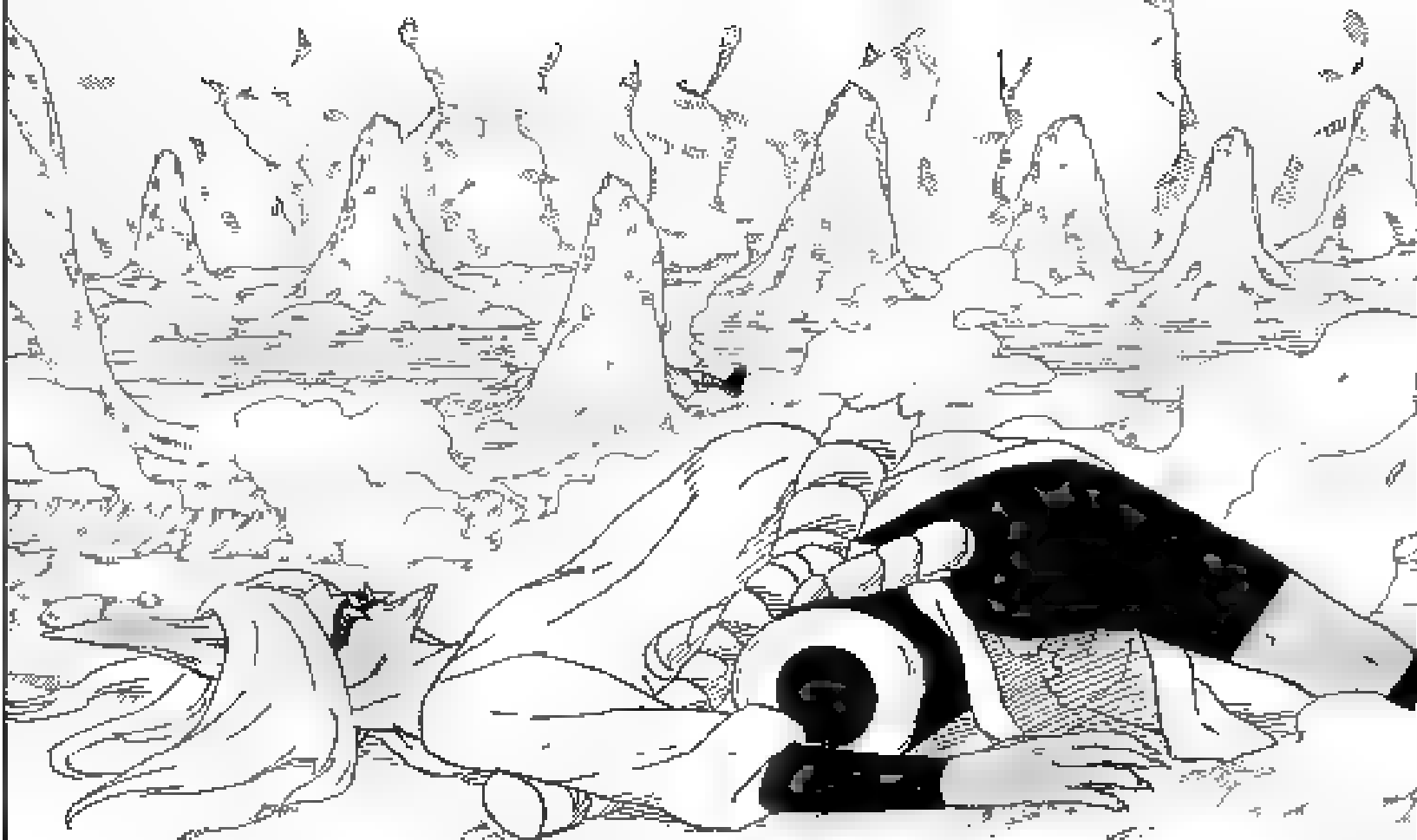


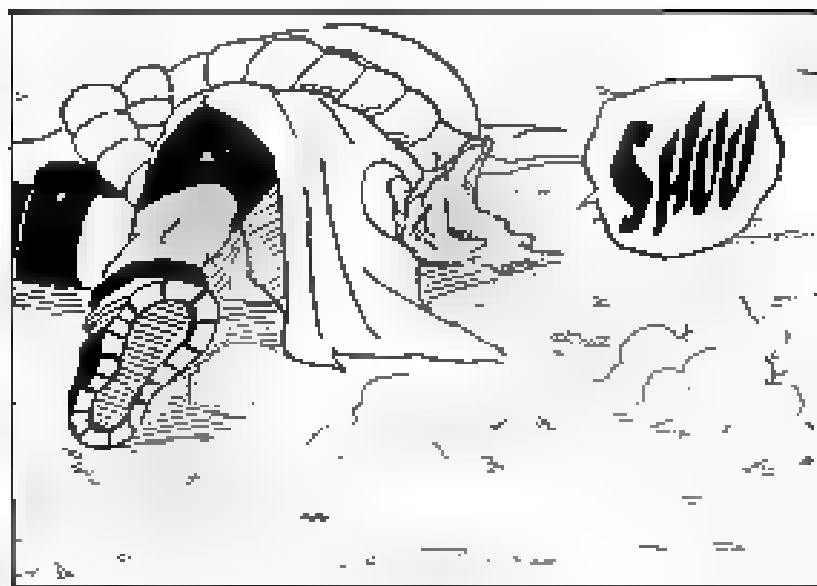
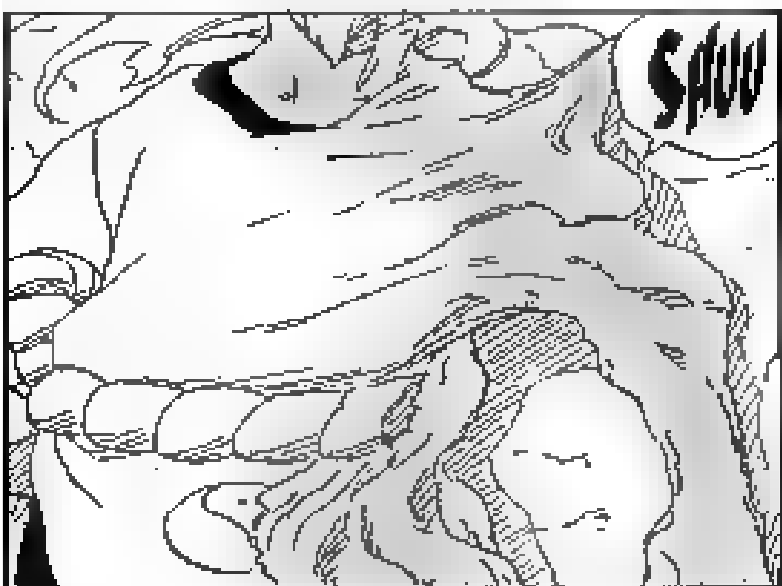
Number 204: Ukon's Prowess







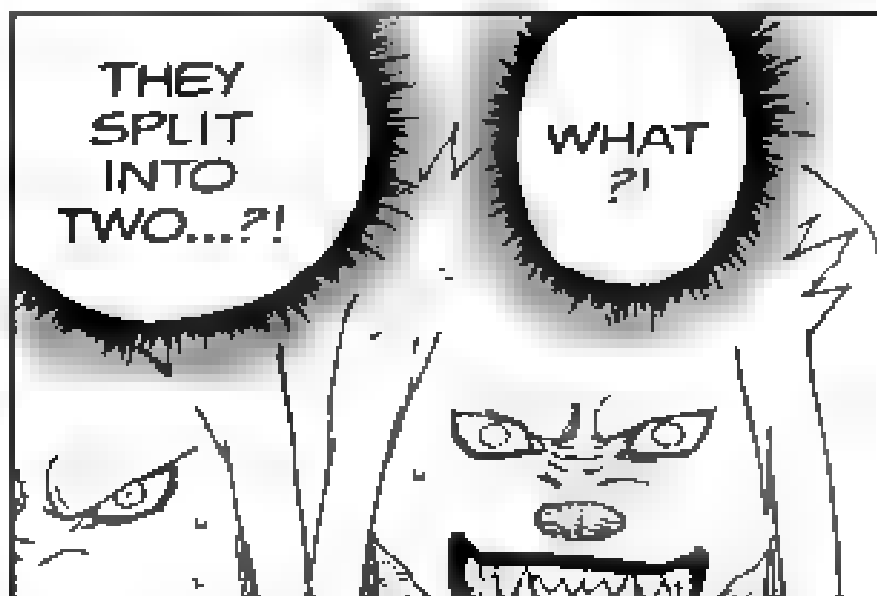




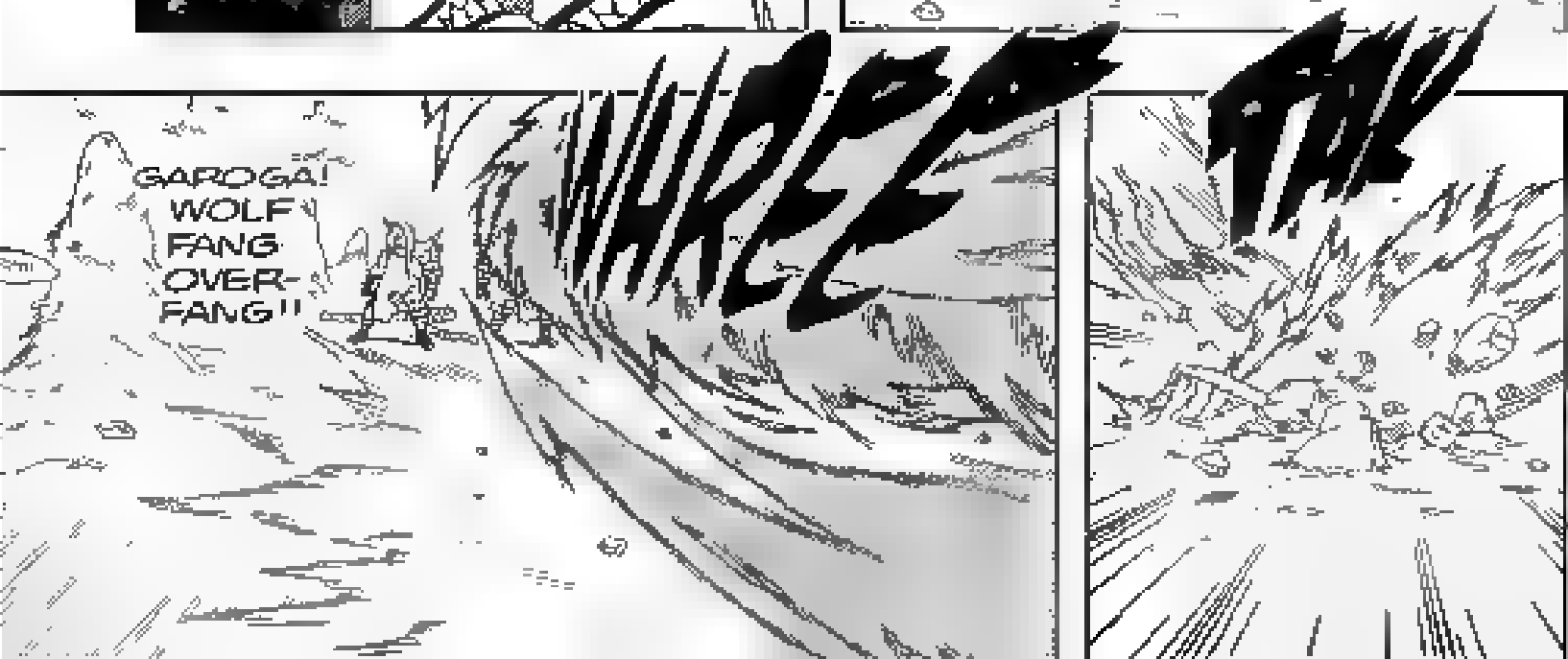
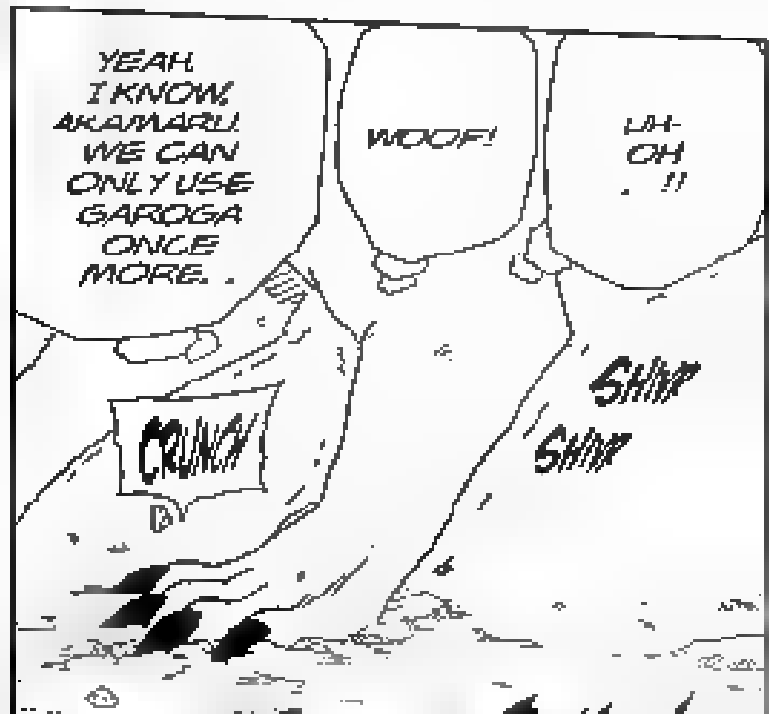
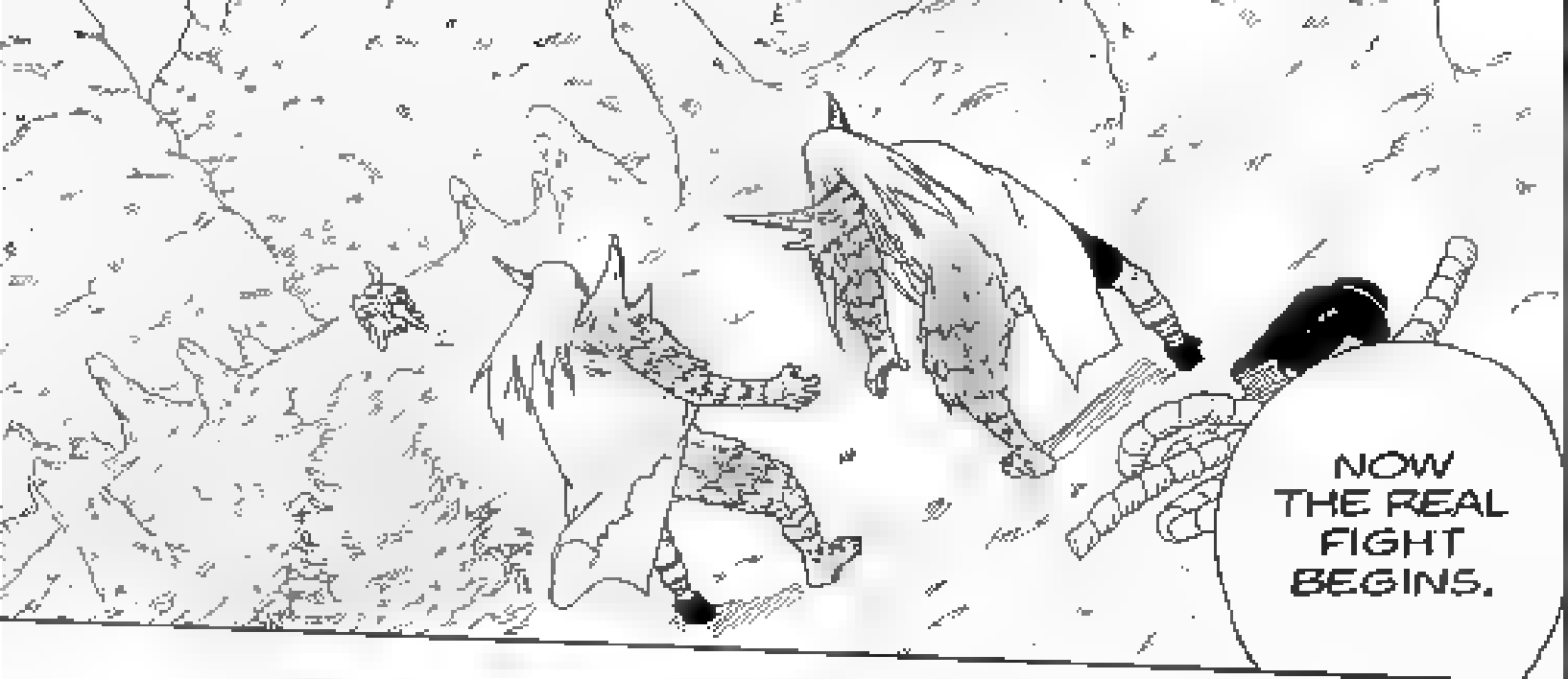
WHATEVER...
WE WERE
JUST THINK-
ING ABOUT
SPLITTING
UP TO FINISH
YOU OFF.

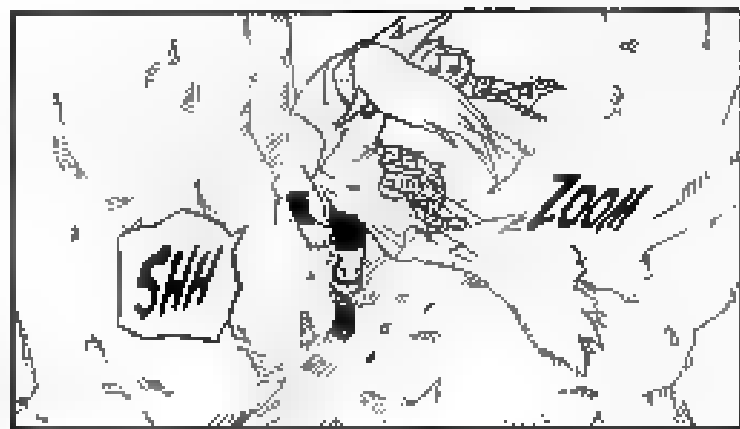
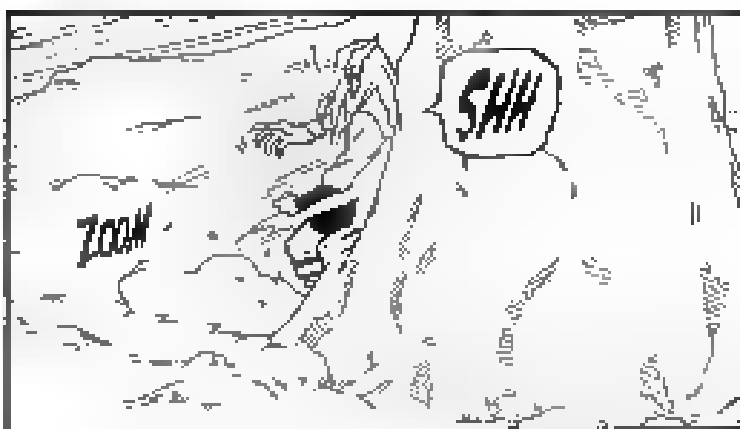


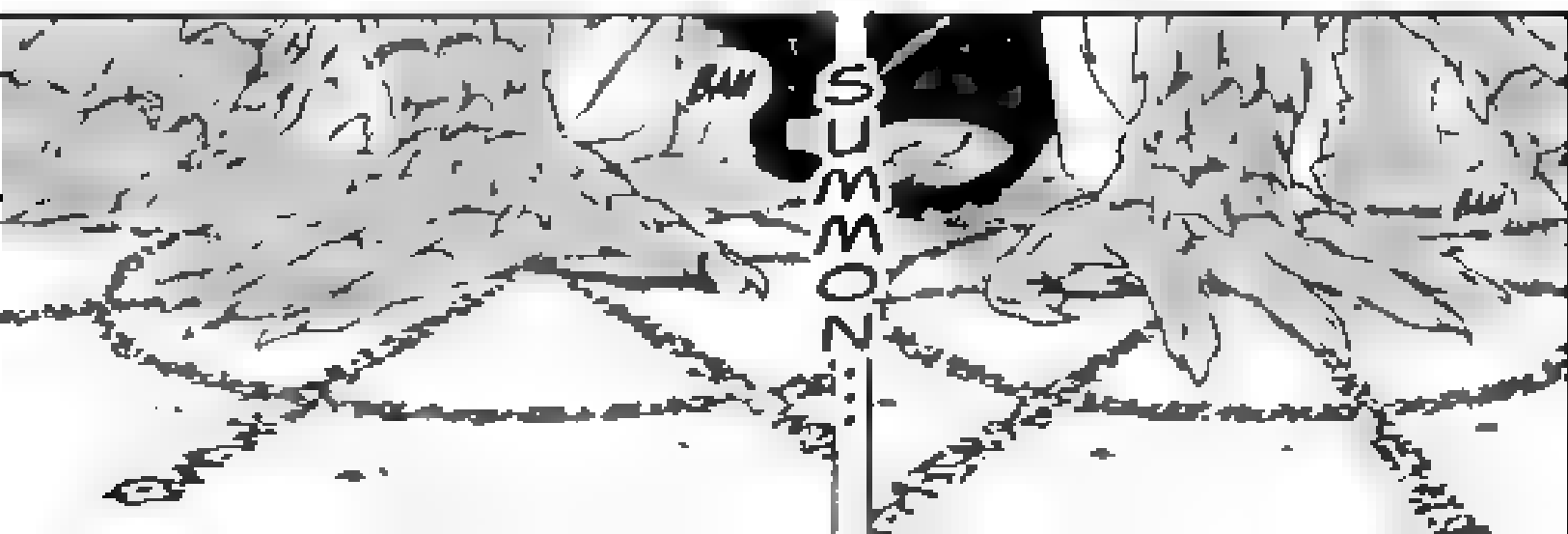
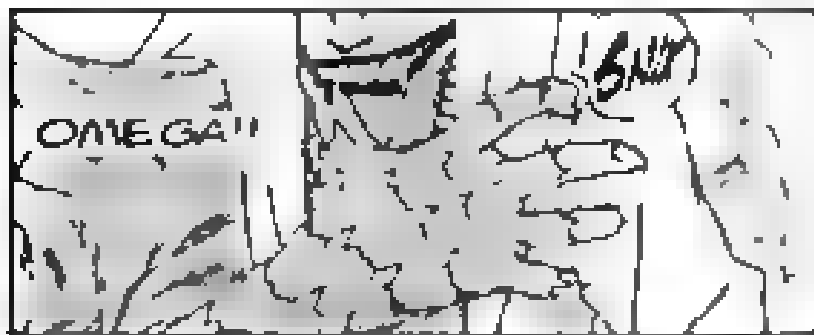
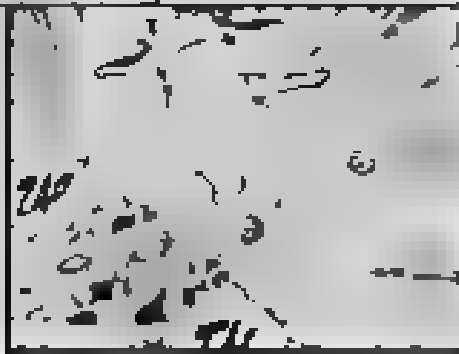
IT'S TRUE...
IF WE WERE
HIT BY YOUR
ATTACK
WITH ONLY
ONE BODY,
YOU MIGHT'VE
HAD US...

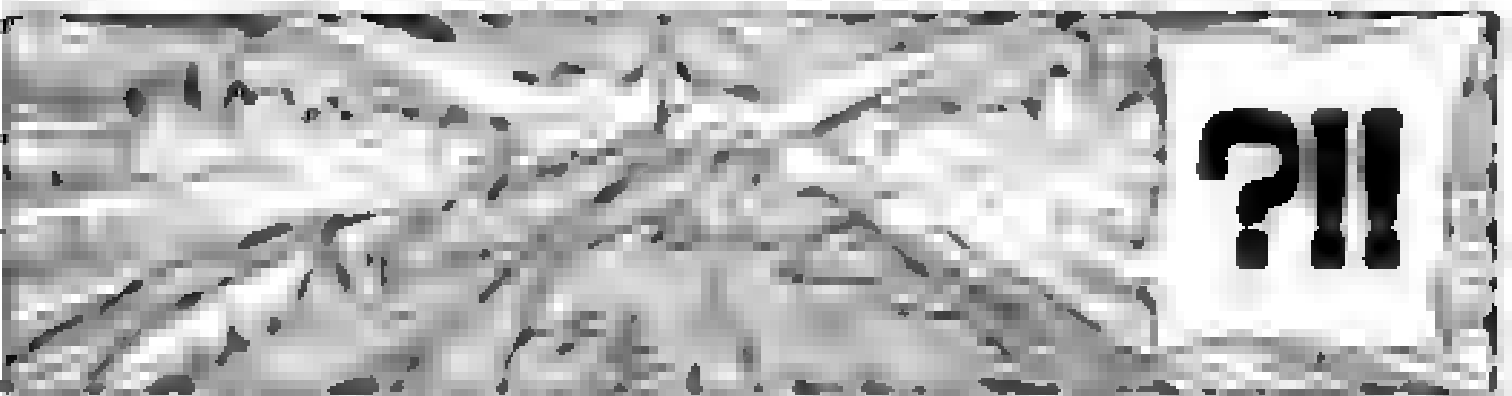


THEY
SPLIT
INTO
TWO...?!
WHAT
?!

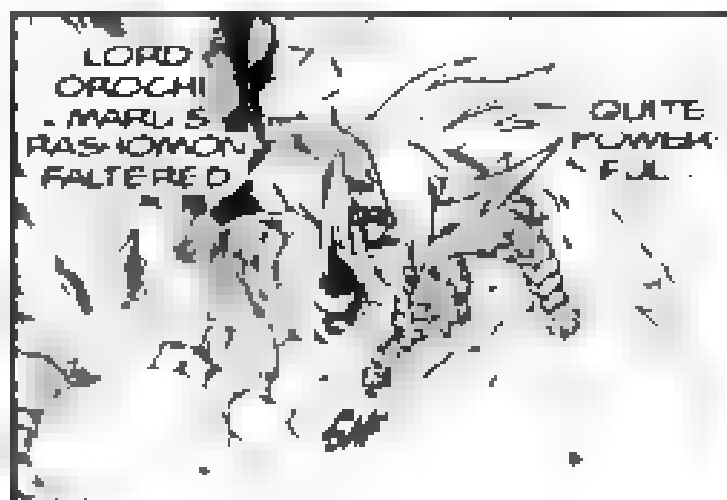








??





THIS
IS THE
END!!

FW

AKAMARU,
YOU TOOK
THE BLOW
FOR ME.

TH

UP

WHERE'S
THE
OTHER
ONE?!

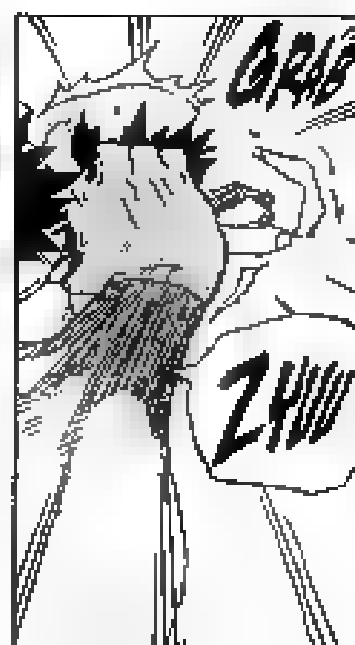
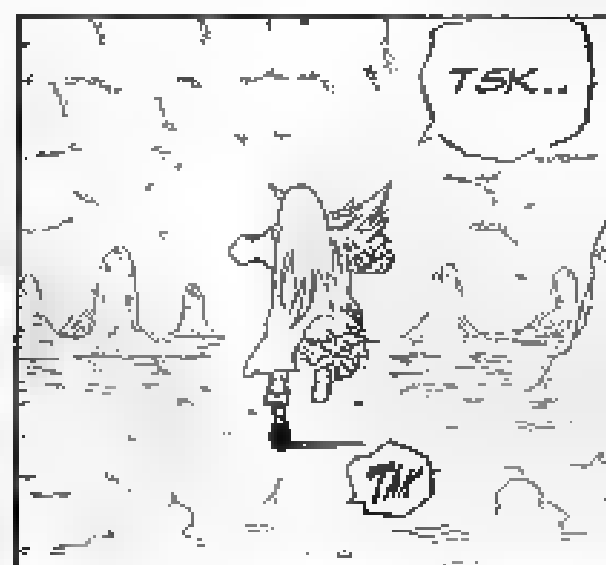
?!

UGH
UGH.

LOOKING
FOR
SOMEONE?

SHU







AGH

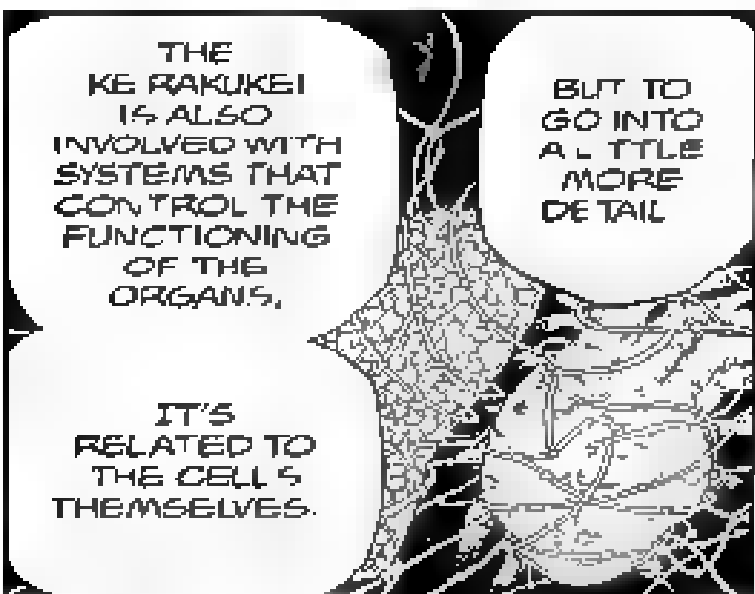
YOU NEED
MORE
THAN JUST
A GOOD
NOSE AND
CLAWS TO
DEFEAT ME.

YOU
CAN'T
OVER-
POWER
ME!



THAT'S
MY SKILL...
ASSASSI-
NATION
SPECIALIST.

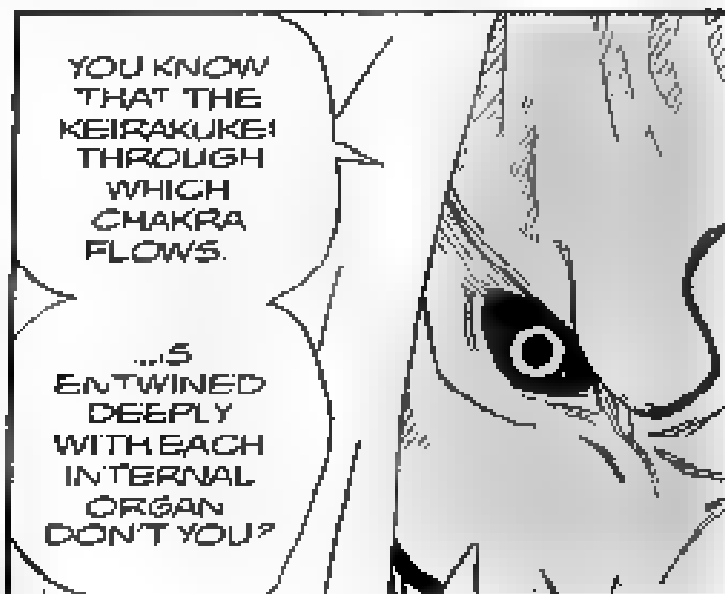
UGH



THE
KE RAKUKEI
IS ALSO
INVOLVED WITH
SYSTEMS THAT
CONTROL THE
FUNCTIONING
OF THE
ORGANS.

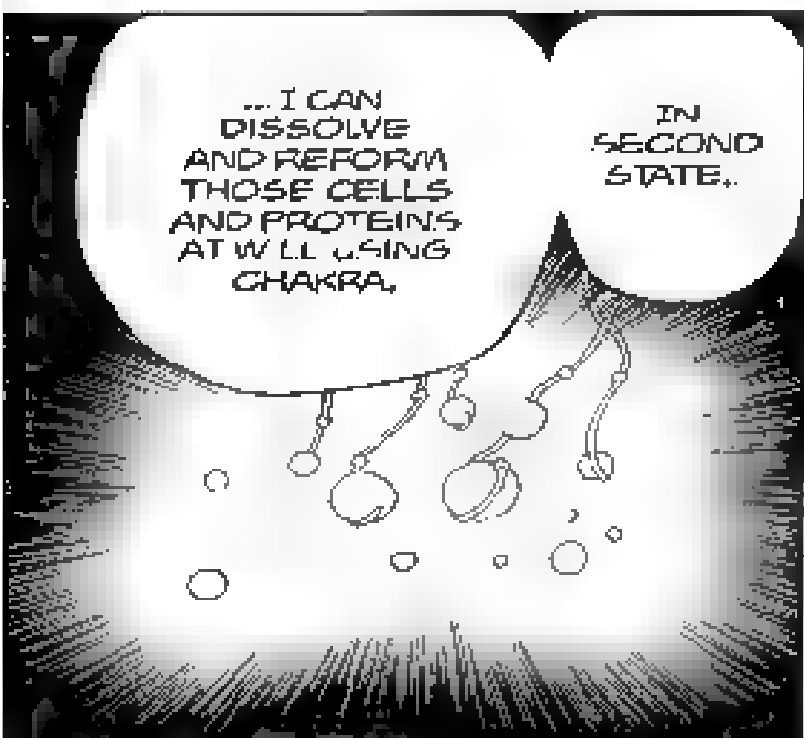
IT'S
RELATED TO
THE CELL'S
THEMSELVES.

BUT TO
GO INTO
A LITTLE
MORE
DETAIL



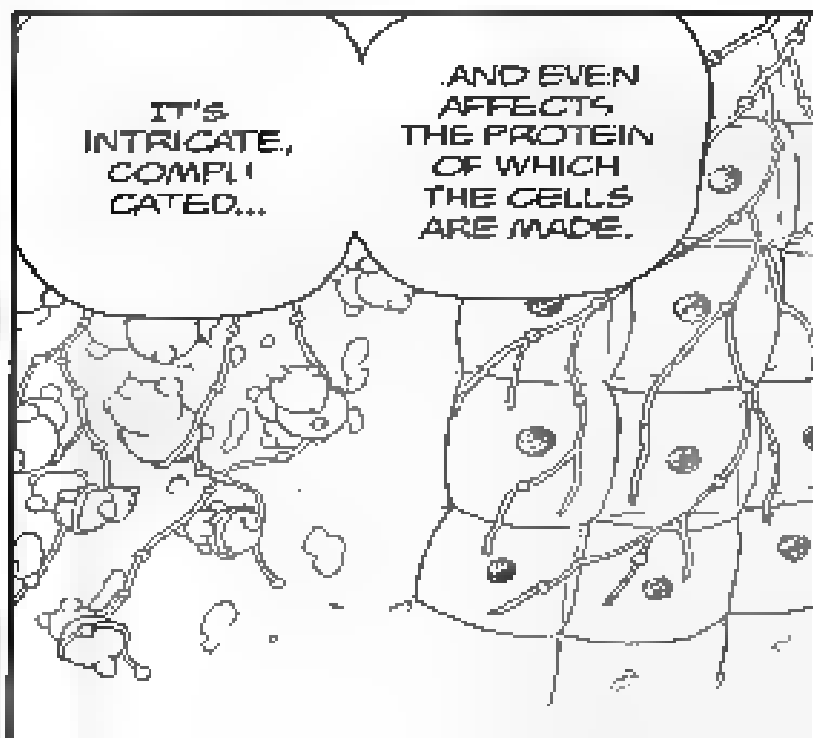
YOU KNOW
THAT THE
KEIRAKUKEI
THROUGH
WHICH
CHAKRA
FLOWS.

...IS
ENTWINED
DEEPLY
WITH EACH
INTERNAL
ORGAN
DON'T YOU?



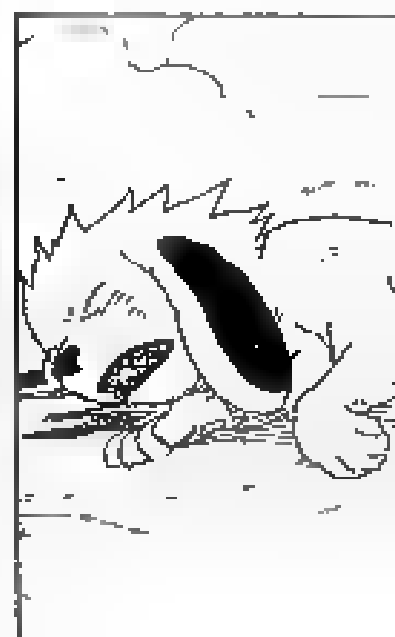
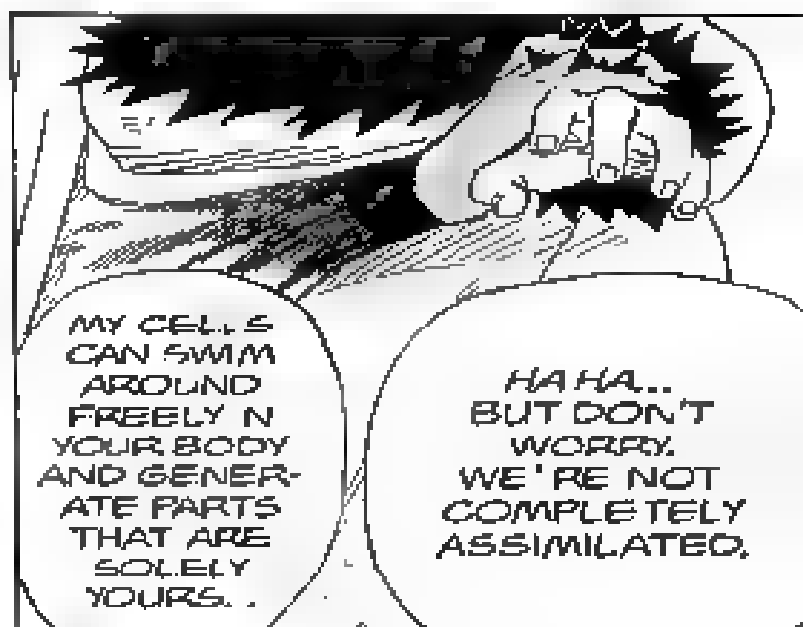
... I CAN
DISSOLVE
AND REFORM
THOSE CELLS
AND PROTEINS
AT WILL USING
CHAKRA.

IN
SECOND
STATE..

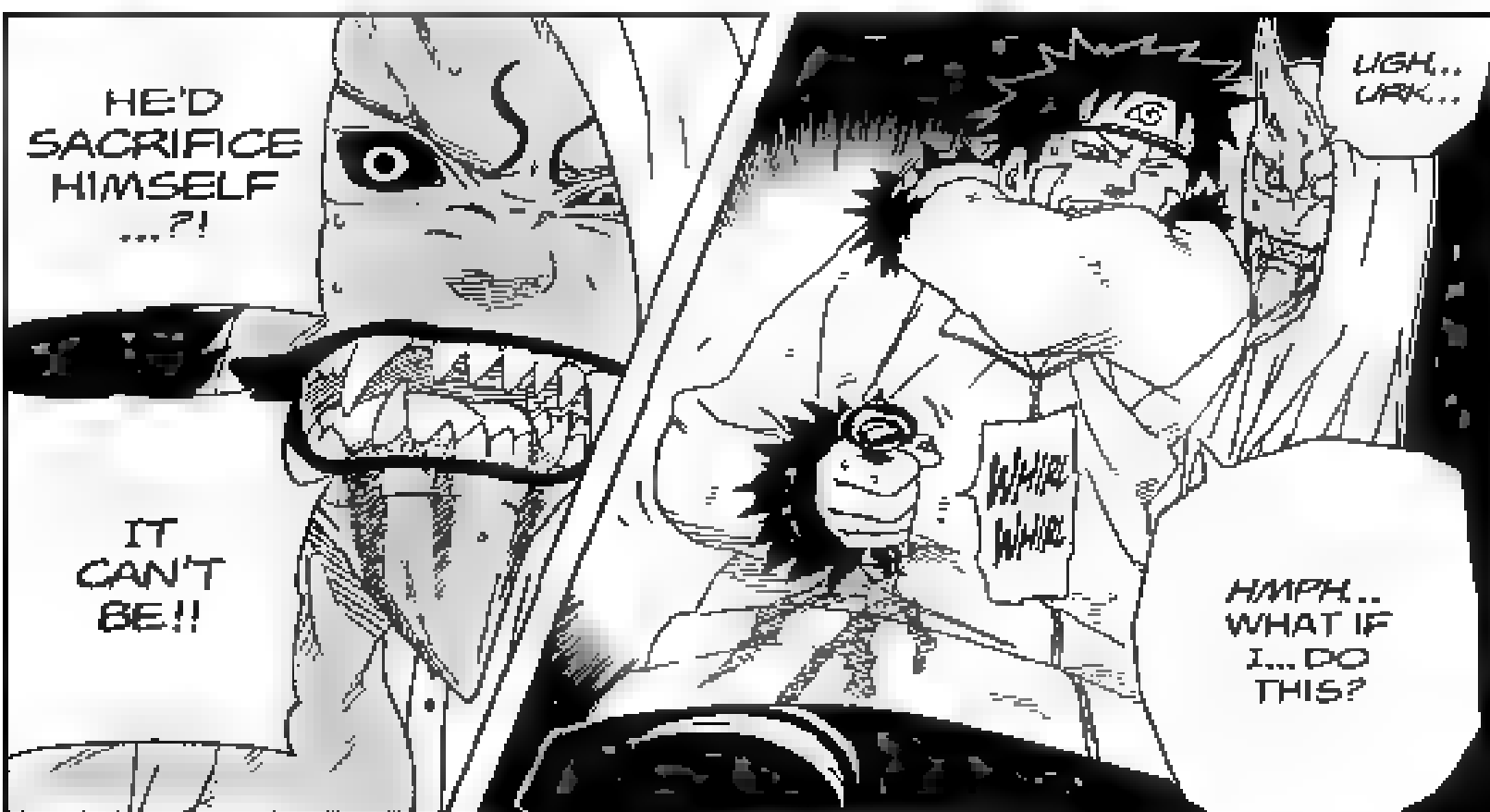


IT'S
INTRICATE,
COMPLI-
CATED...

AND EVEN
AFFECTS
THE PROTEIN
OF WHICH
THE CELLS
ARE MADE.







NO

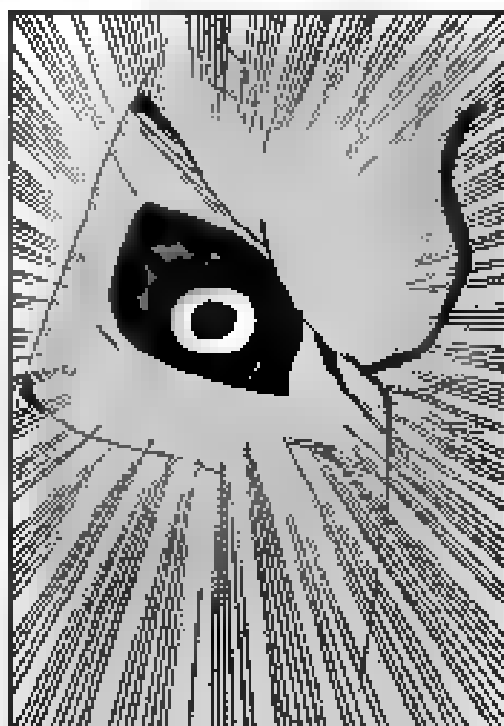
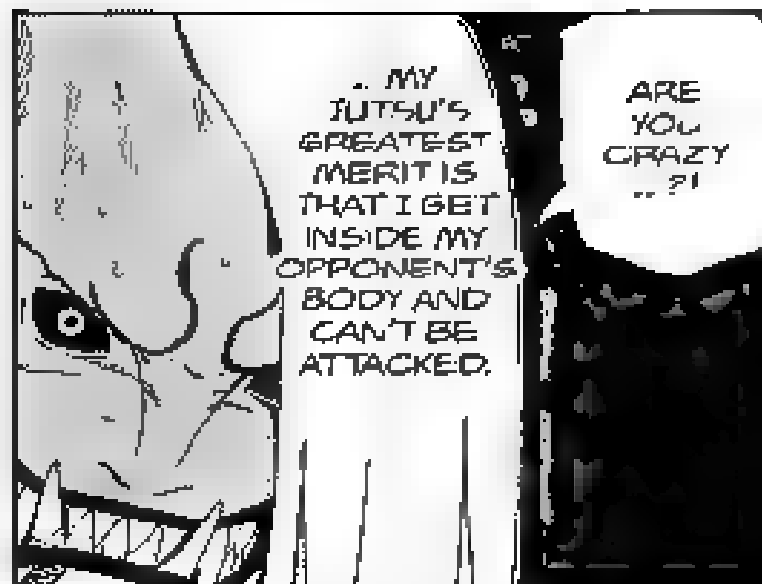
TM

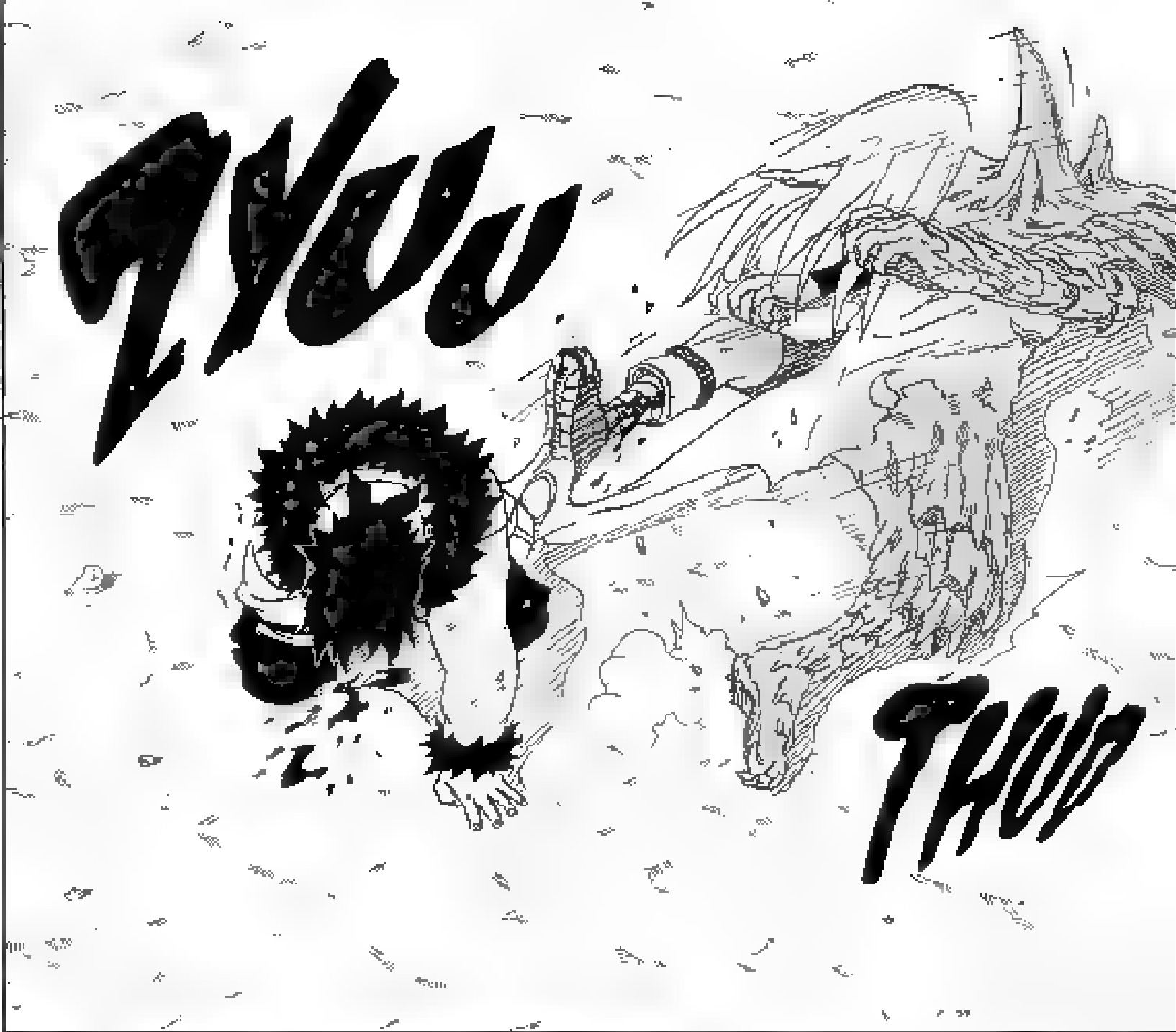


Number 205: Kiba's Decision!!

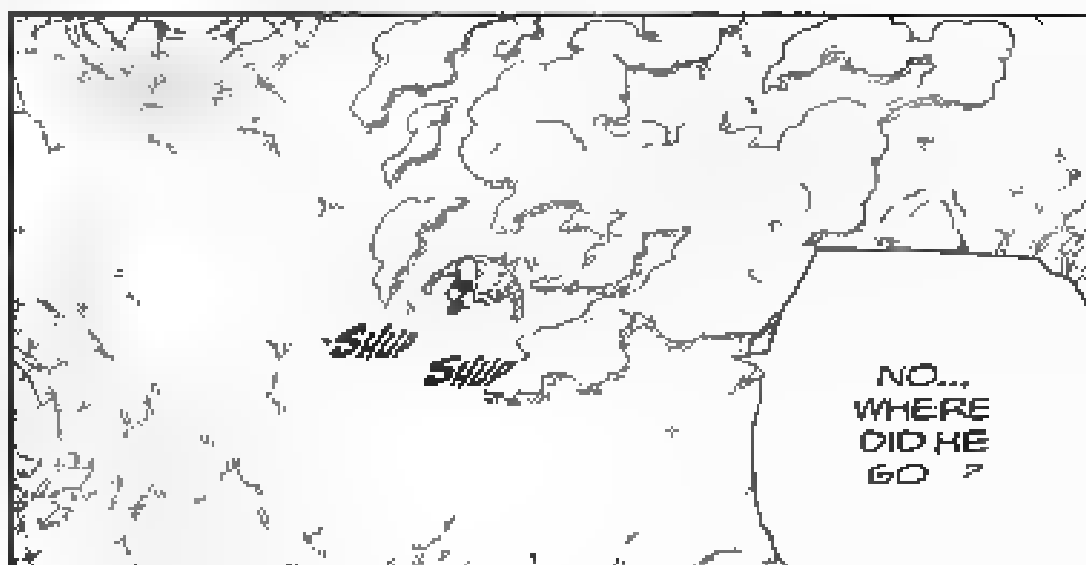
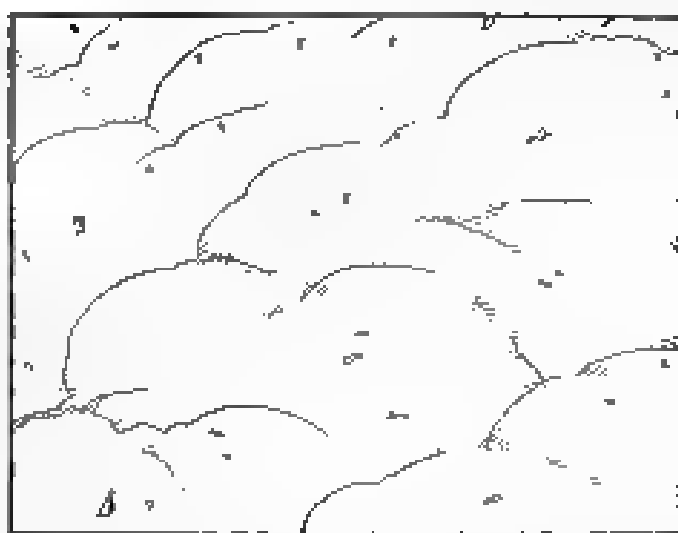
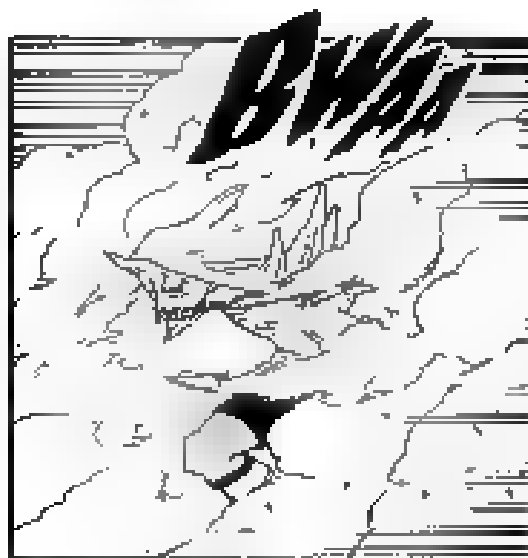


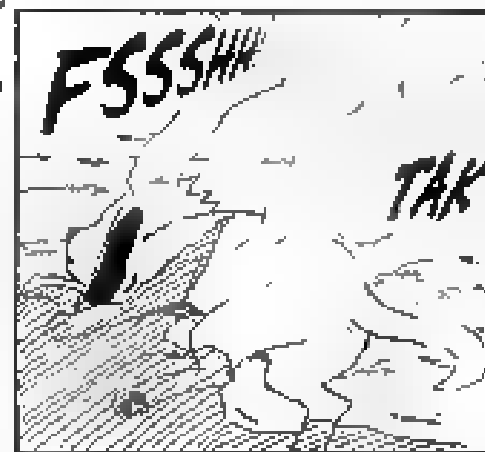
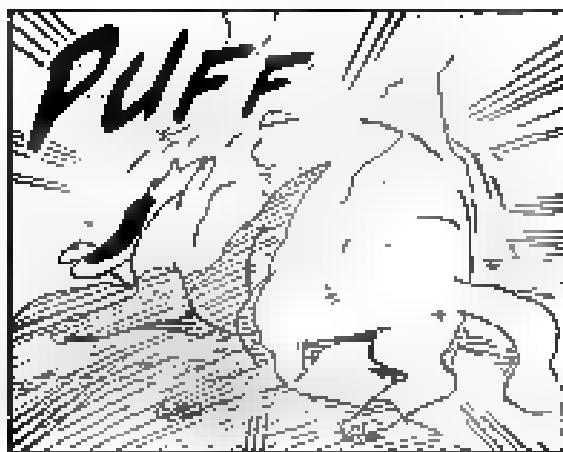
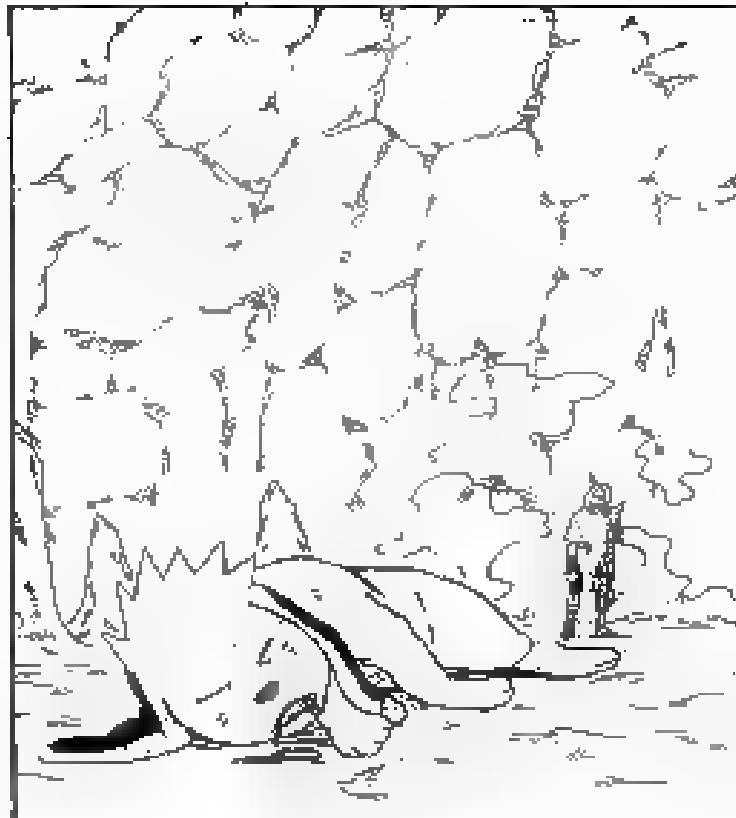
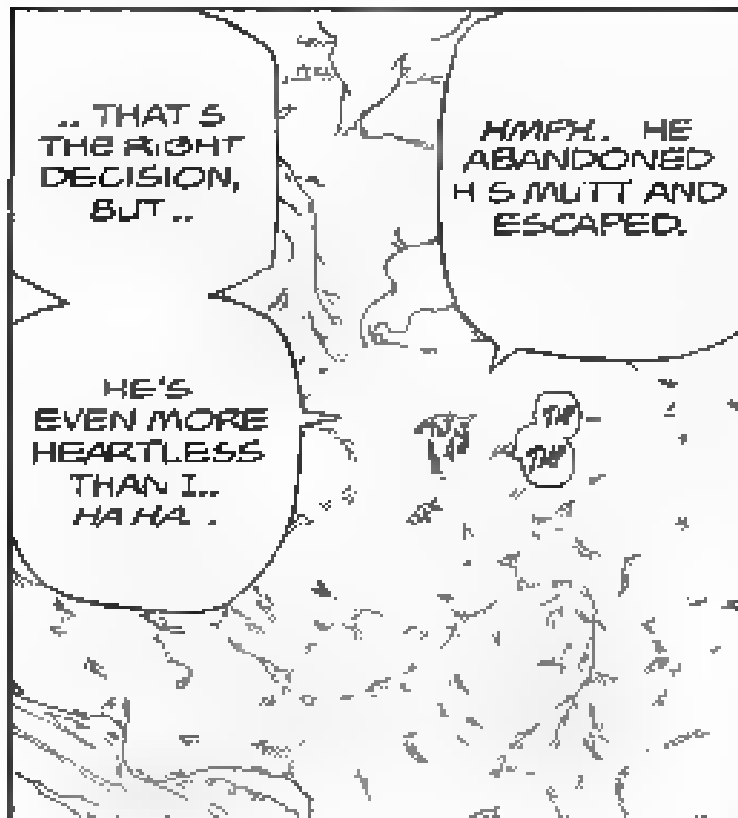


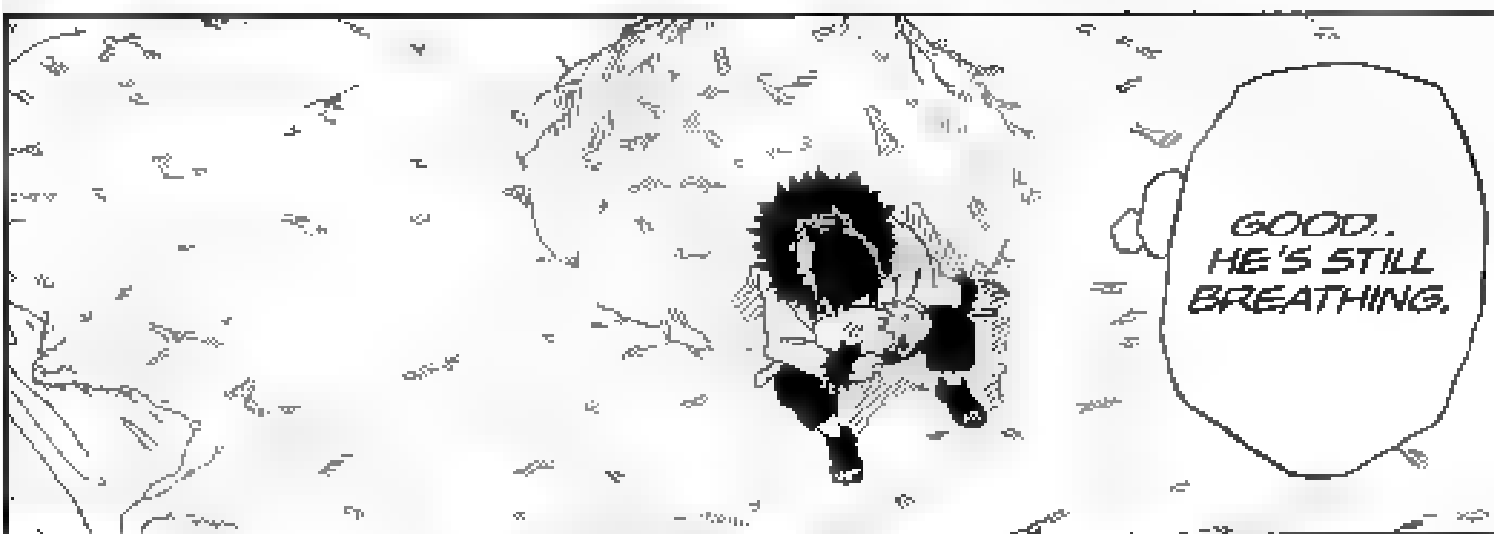
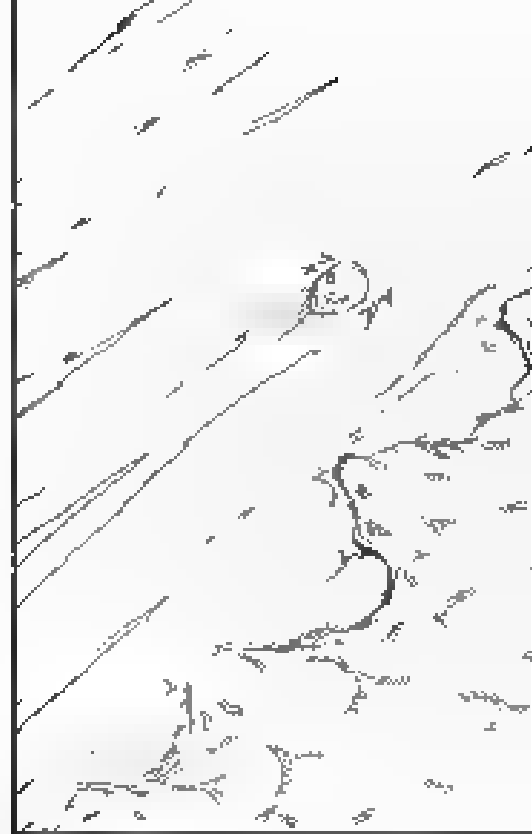
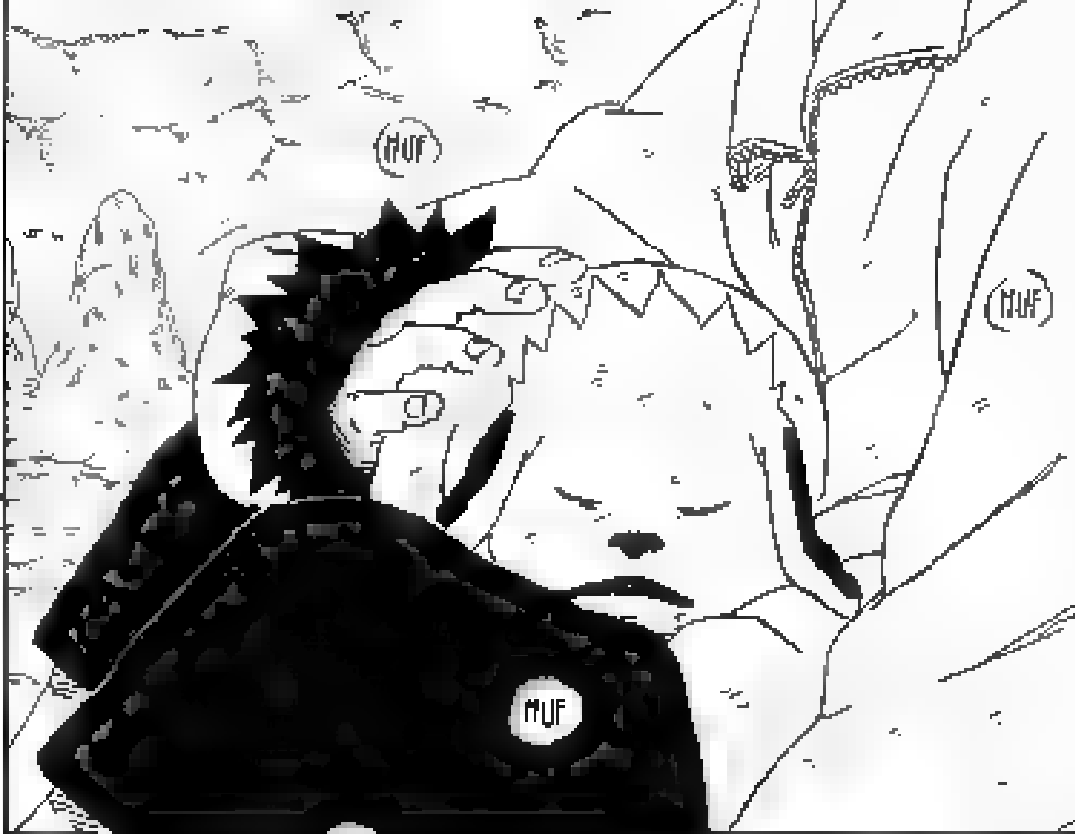




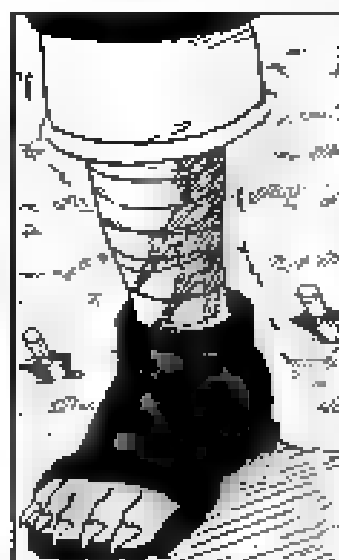
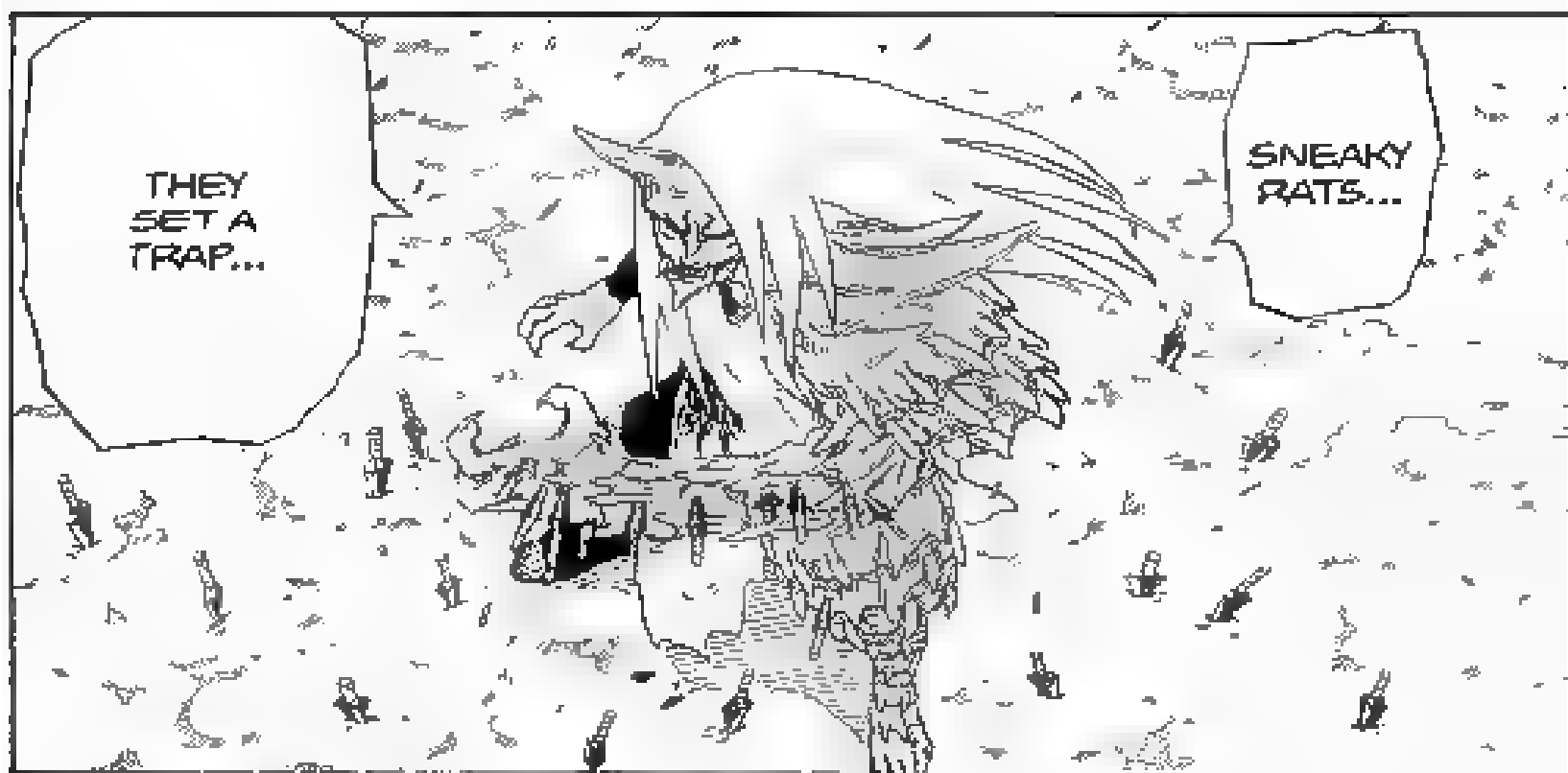
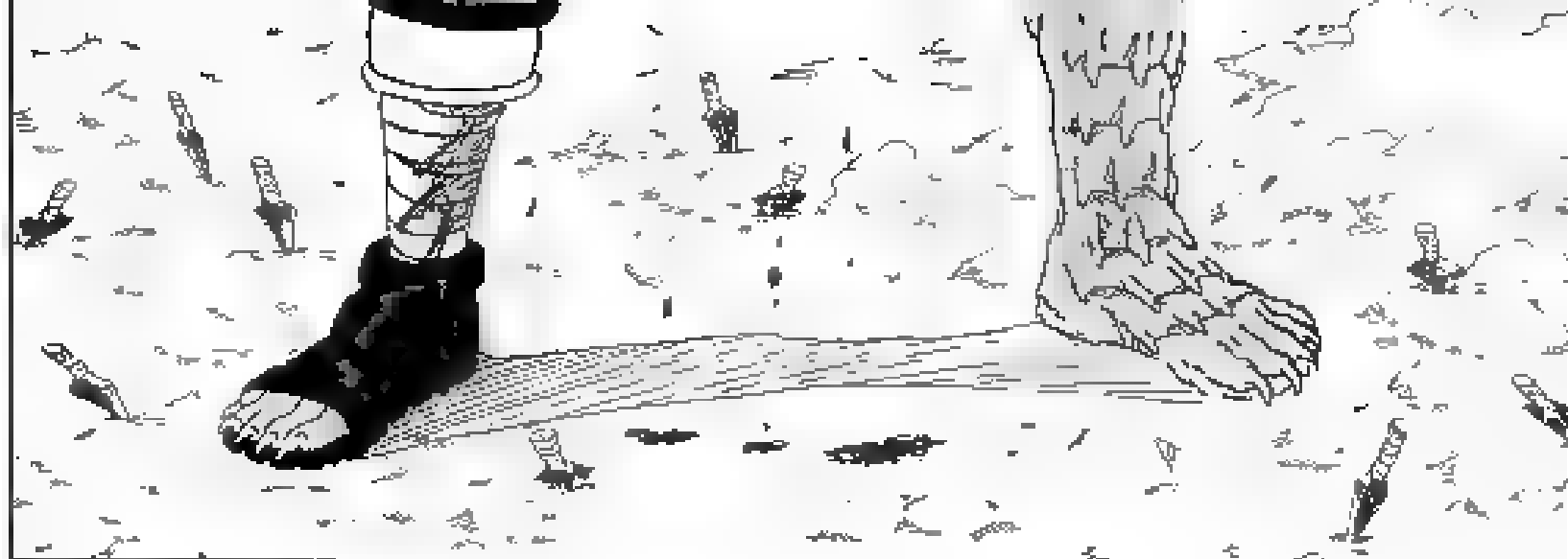














THEY'RE
DEAD!!



...

GRRA



!

CLOMP

SPLOSH

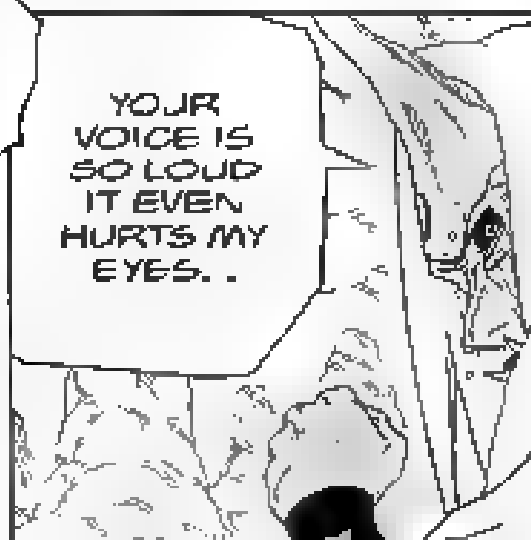


HEY!
SAKON!
WHERE
ARE
YOU?

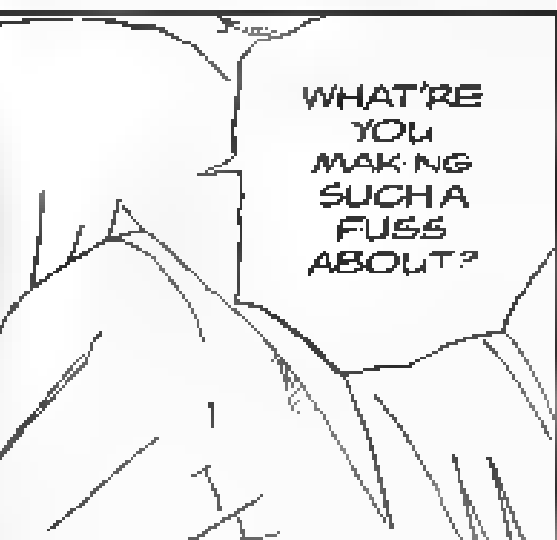
SAKON!!



!!



YOUR
VOICE IS
SO LOUD
IT EVEN
HURTS MY
EYES..



WHAT'RE
YOU
MAKING
SUCH A
FUSS
ABOUT?

GOT
THAT?
TAKE
THEM
ALIVE,
SAKON!!

I'LL
FINISH
THEM
OFF
WHEN I
AWAKEN!

SHUU

IA

BUT IT'S
TIME
FOR MY
REST..

THEY
STILL
MUST
DIE...

**CLOMP
CLOMP**

KEEP
THEM
ALIVE!!

WE KILL
THEM
TOGETHER.

GRFF

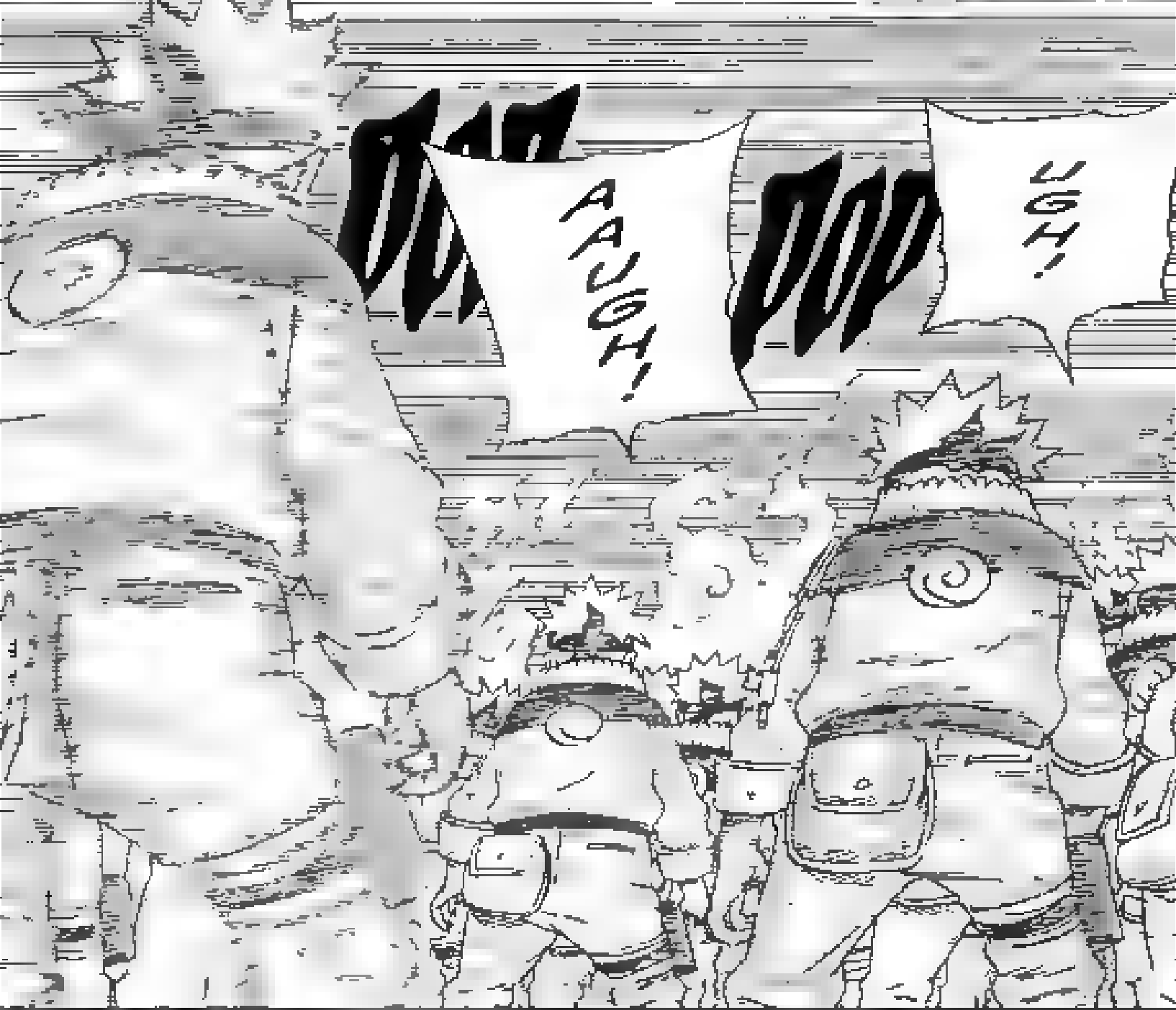
YEAH,
I GOT
IT...
BUT..

BO OF



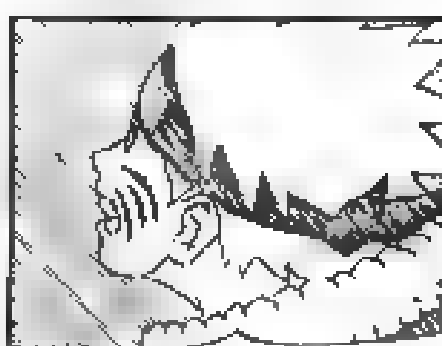
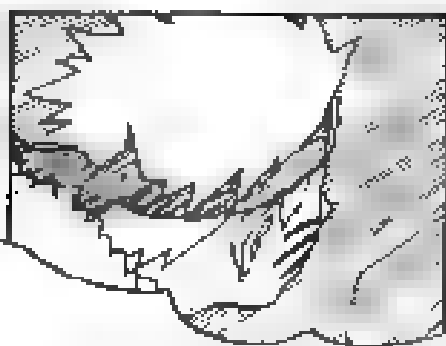
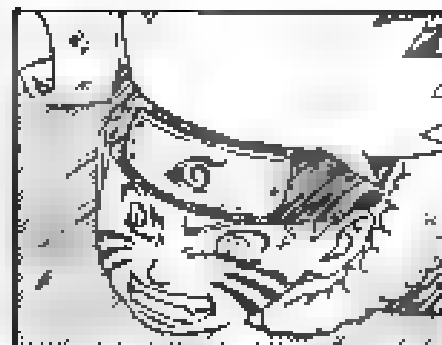
BEHOLD!
YANAGI
NO MAI
WILLOW
DANCE!!

TAK



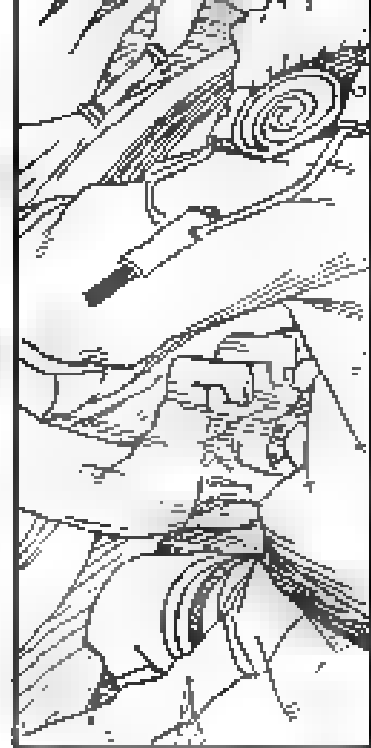
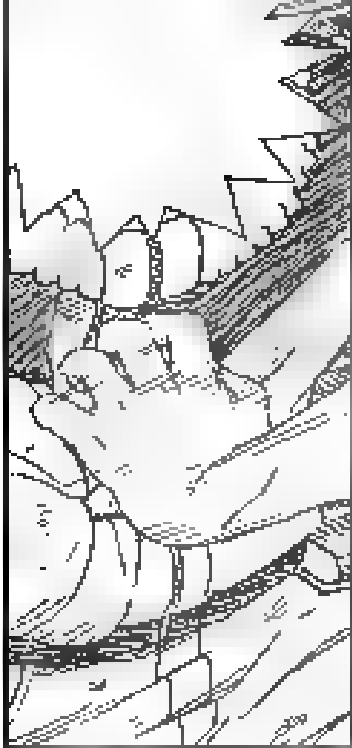






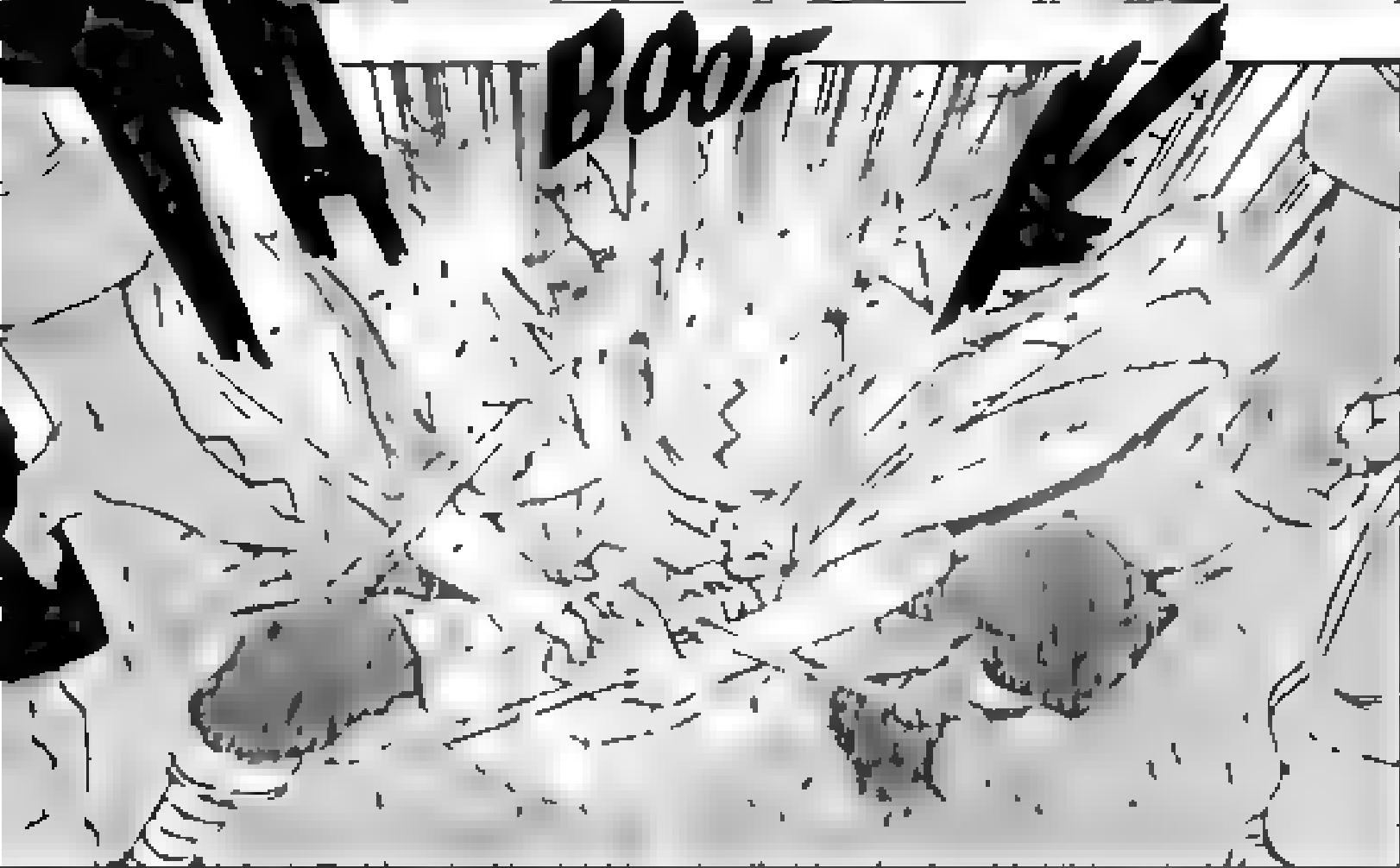
YAAAAAH!!







A
BONE
...?!



MY
KEKKEI
GENKAI.

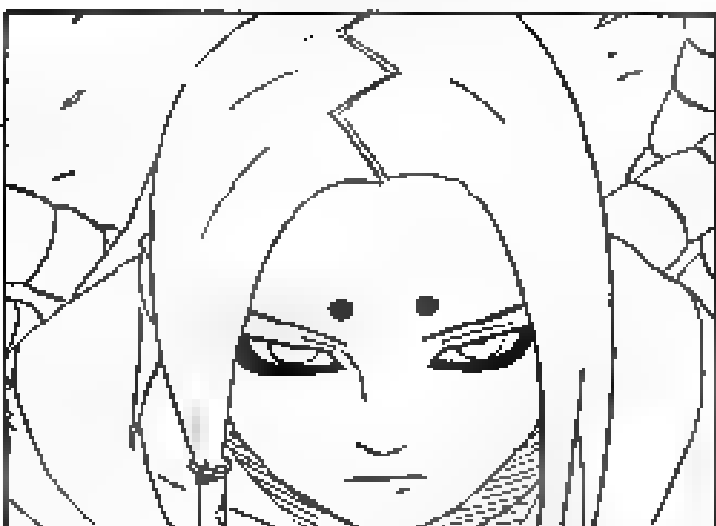
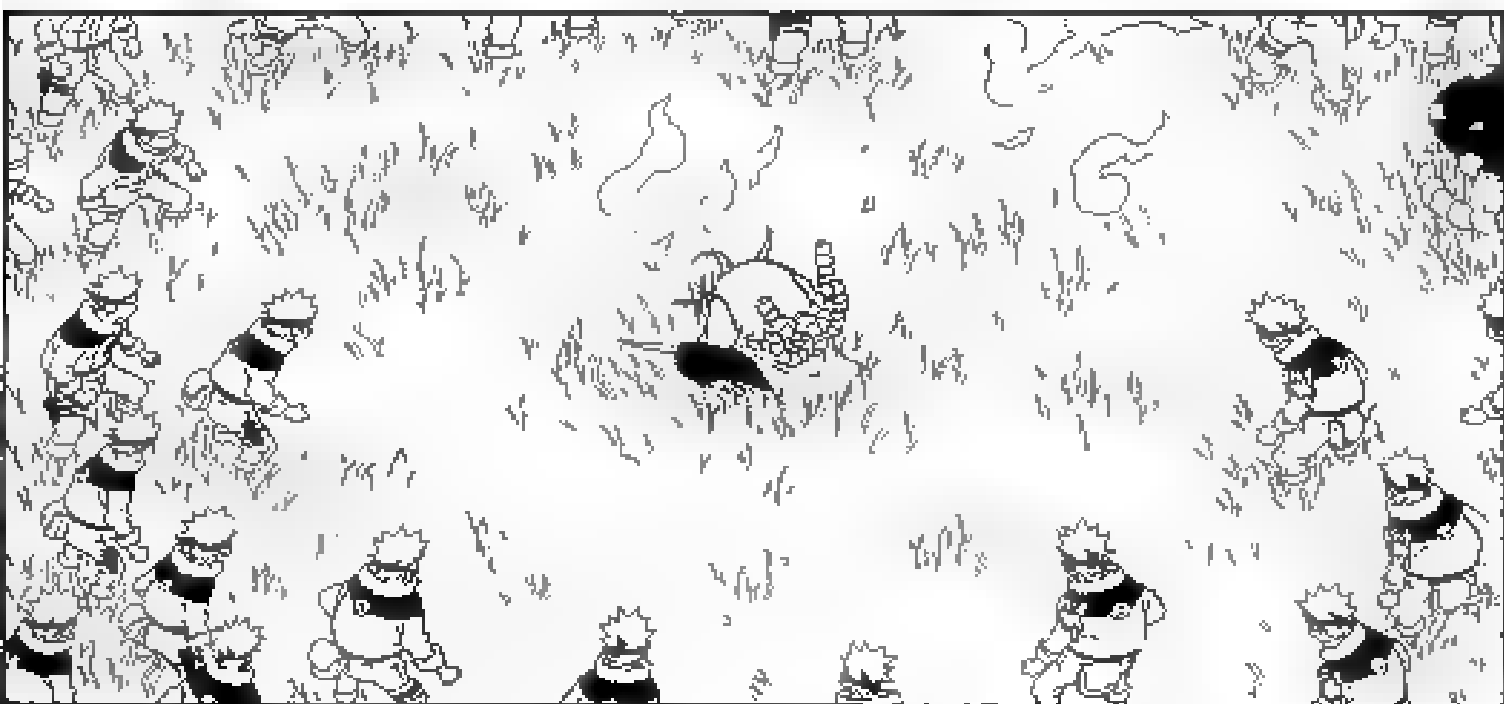
THIS
IS...

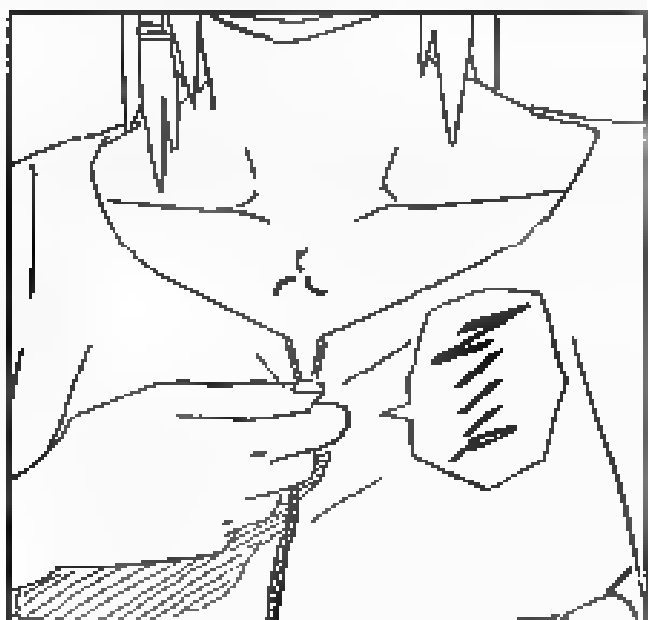


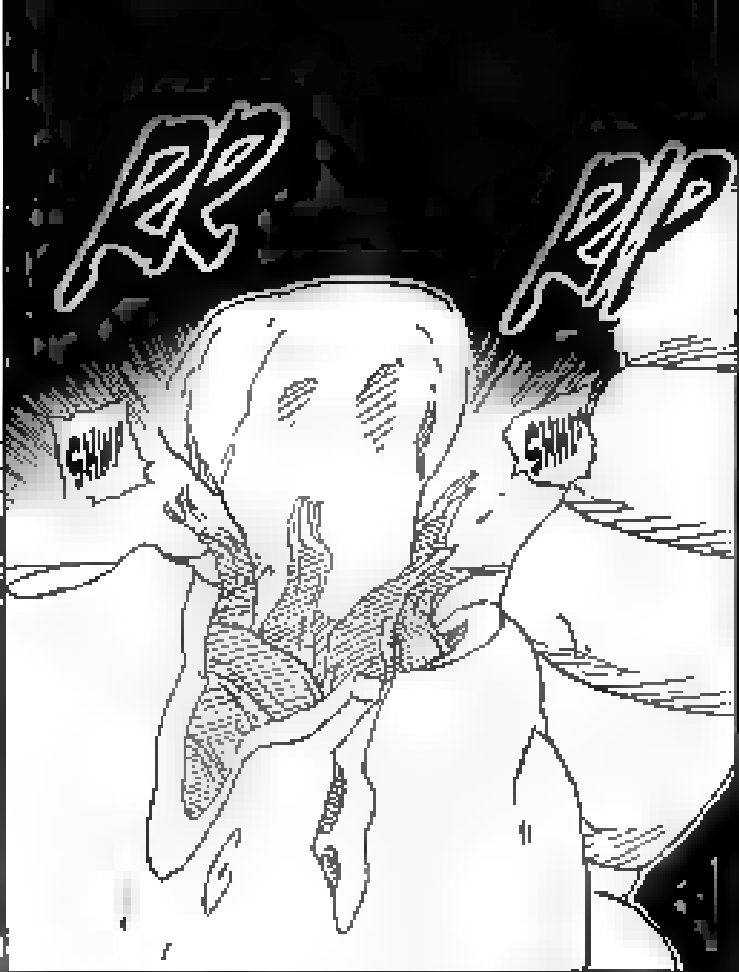


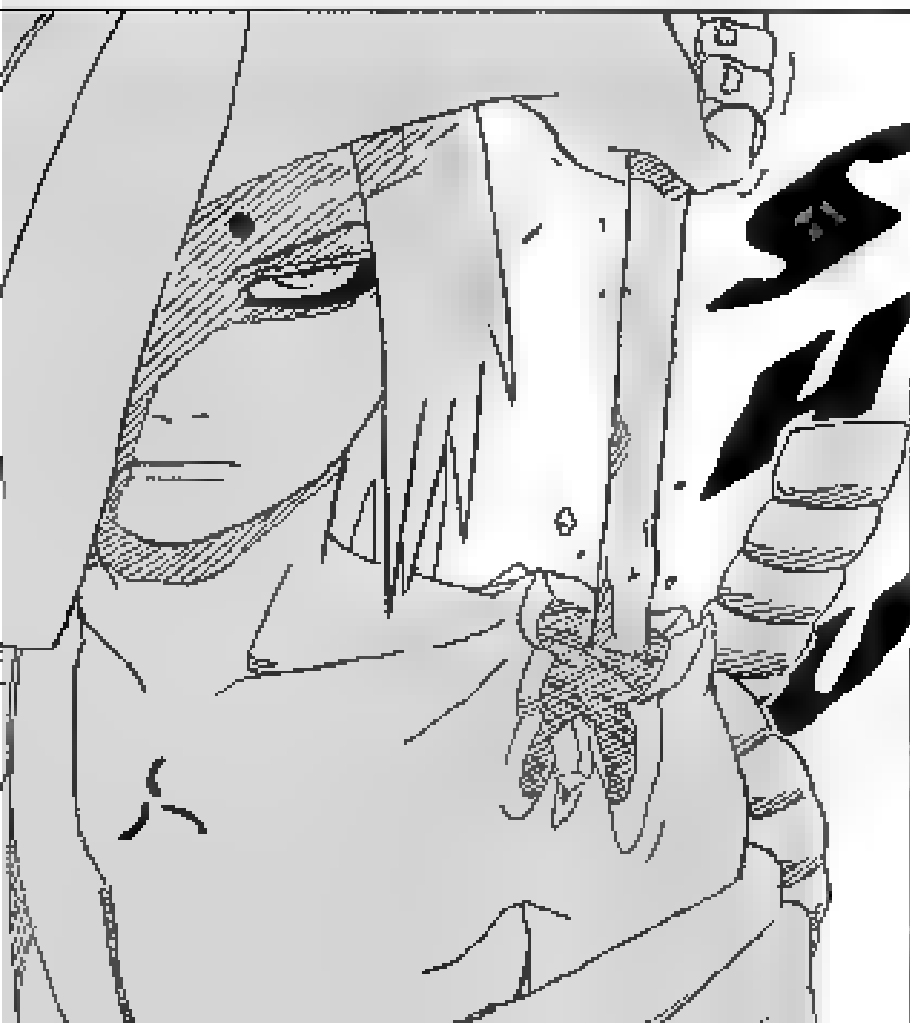
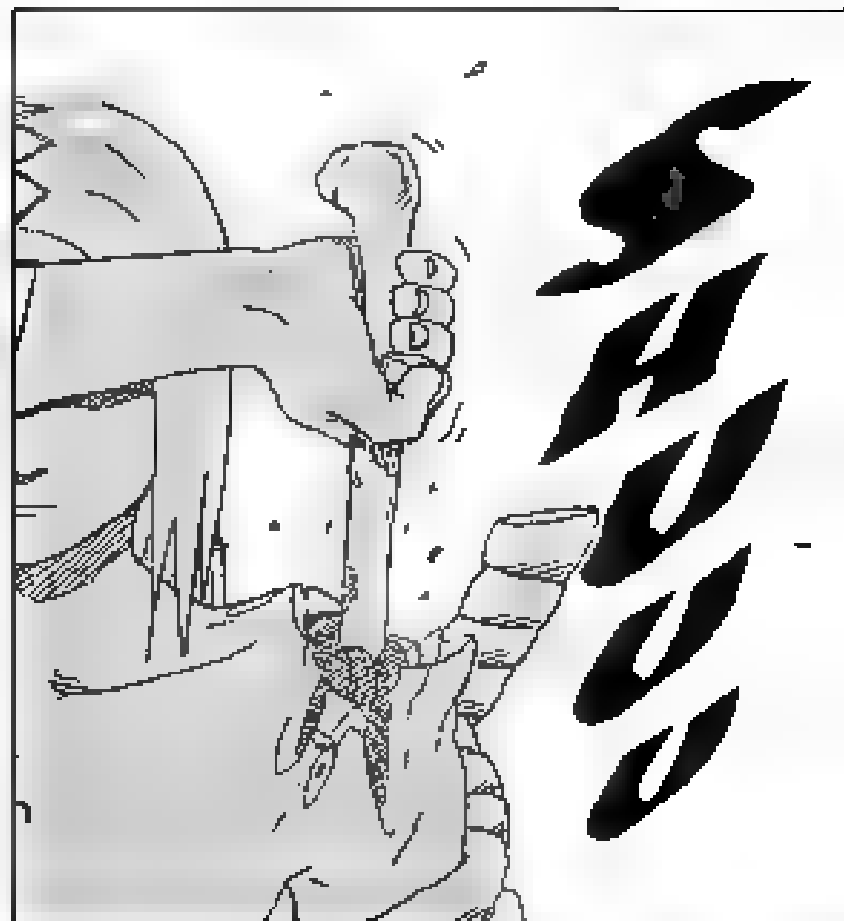
Number 206: Predicament I...!!



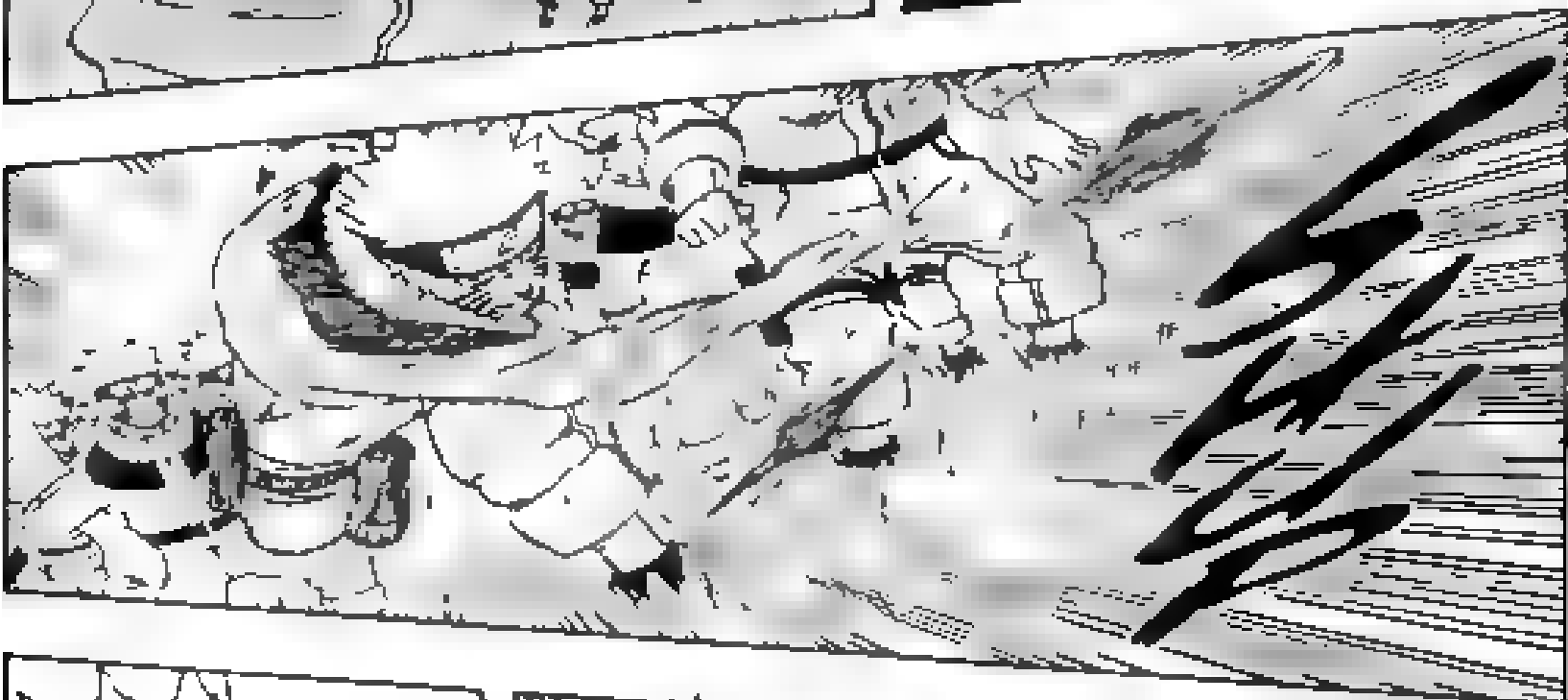














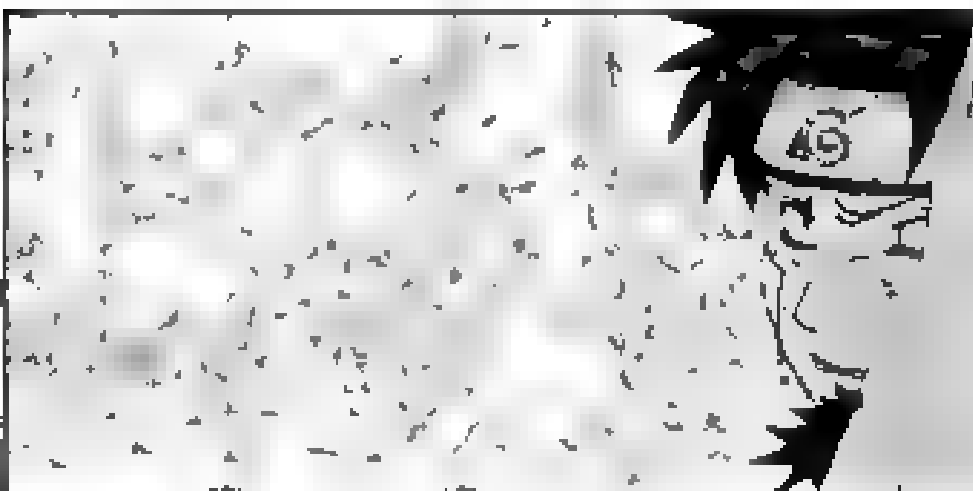
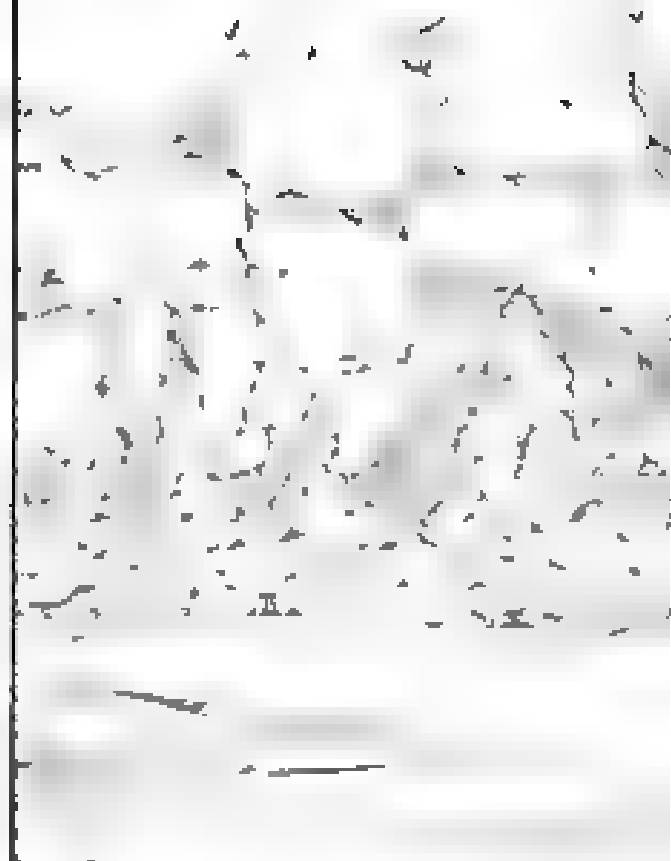


I'LL BE THE
NEXT ONE
TO GET
EATEN!

THAT'S
THE NEXT
ONE!



I'M
GONNA
CRUSH
YOU!!

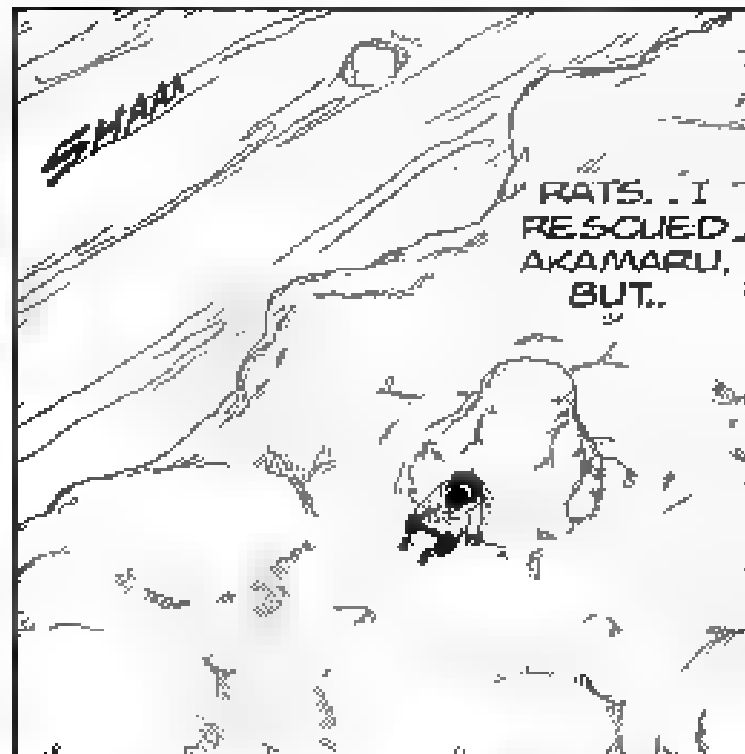


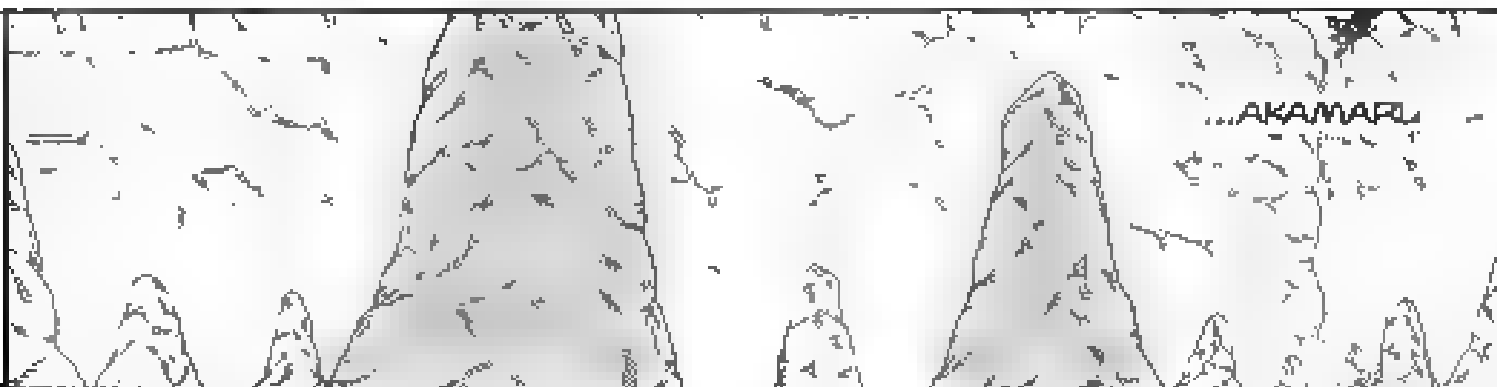
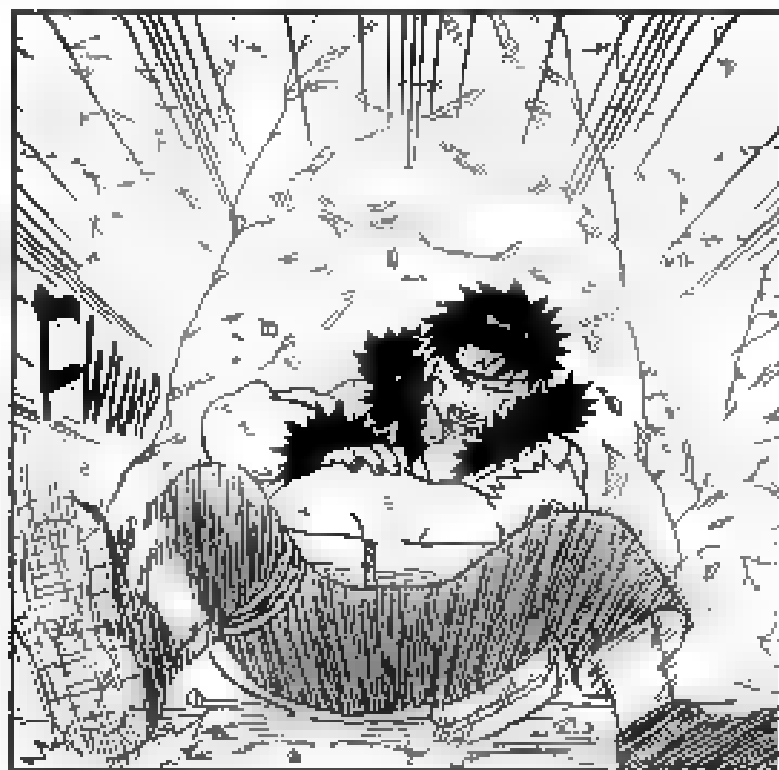
LITTLE BY
LITTLE,
THEY'RE
GETTING
CLOSER...

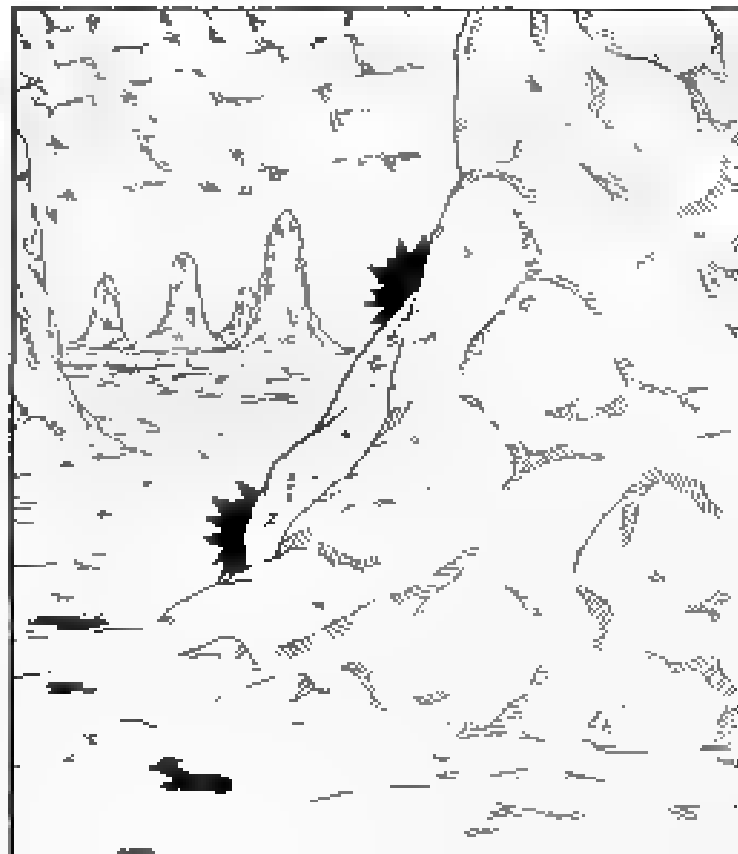
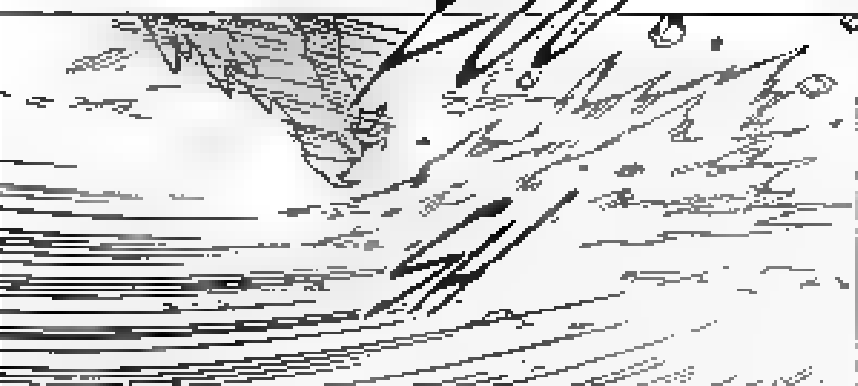
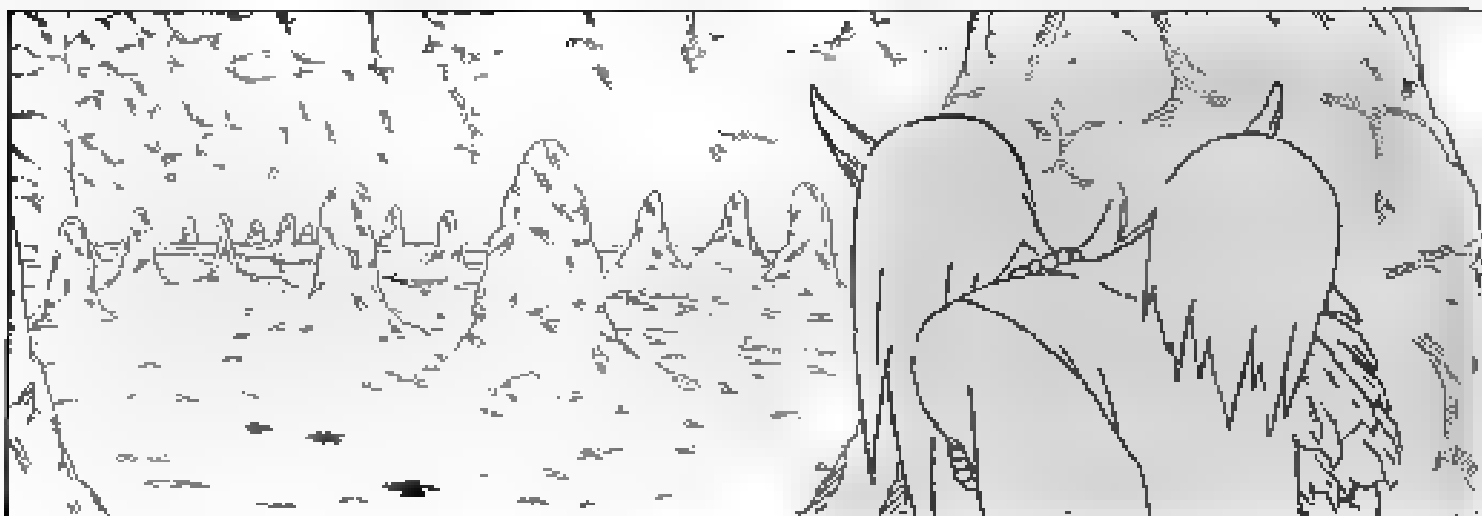
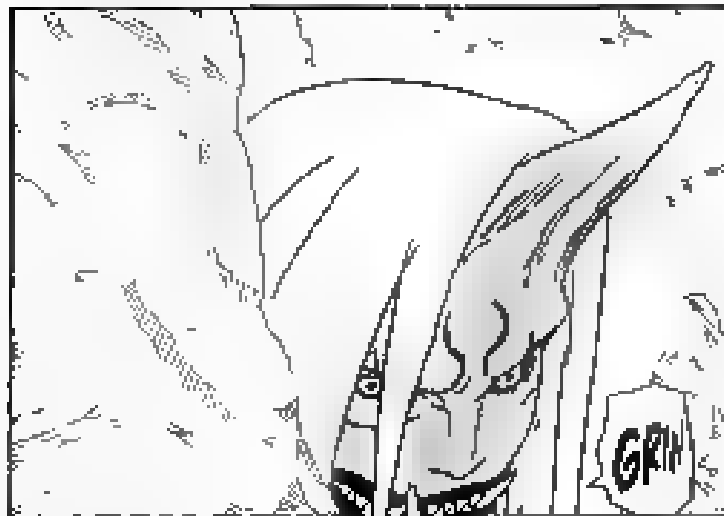


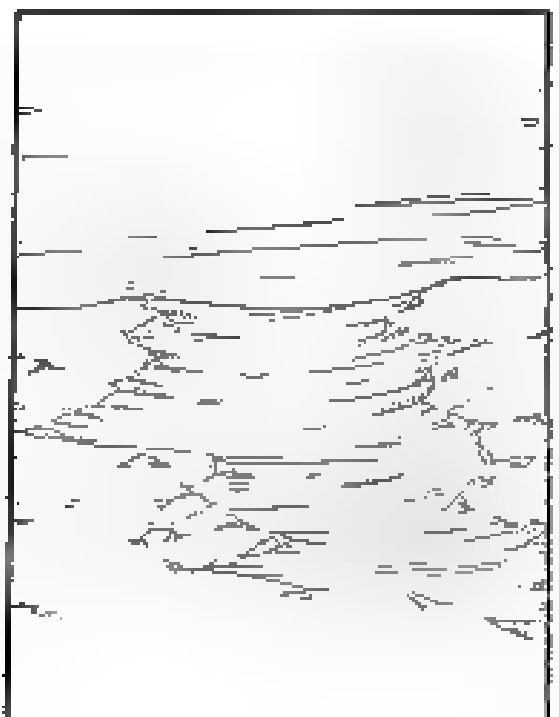
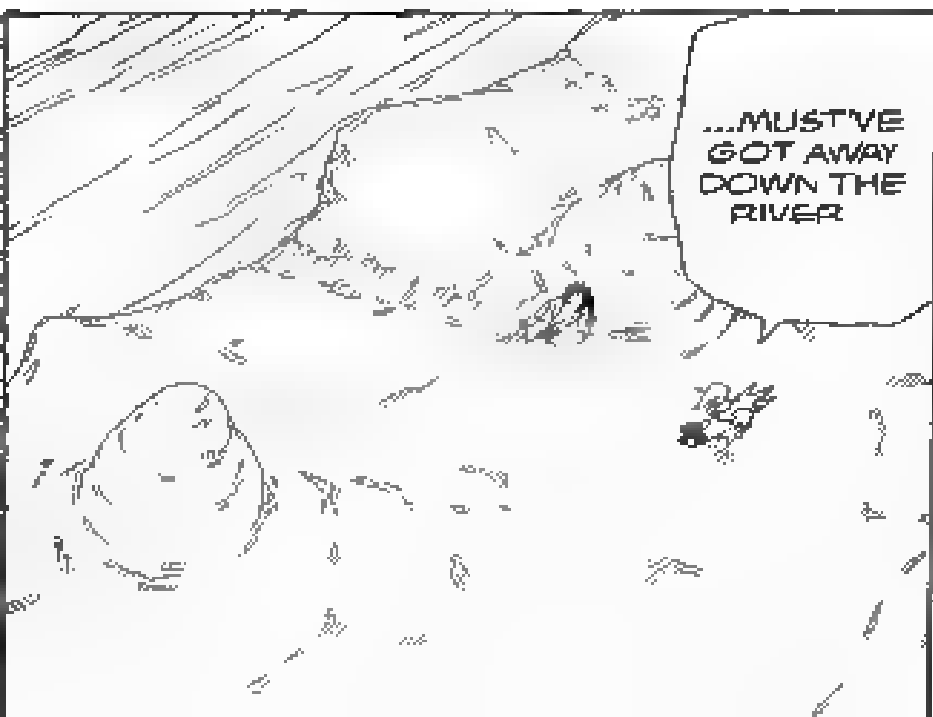
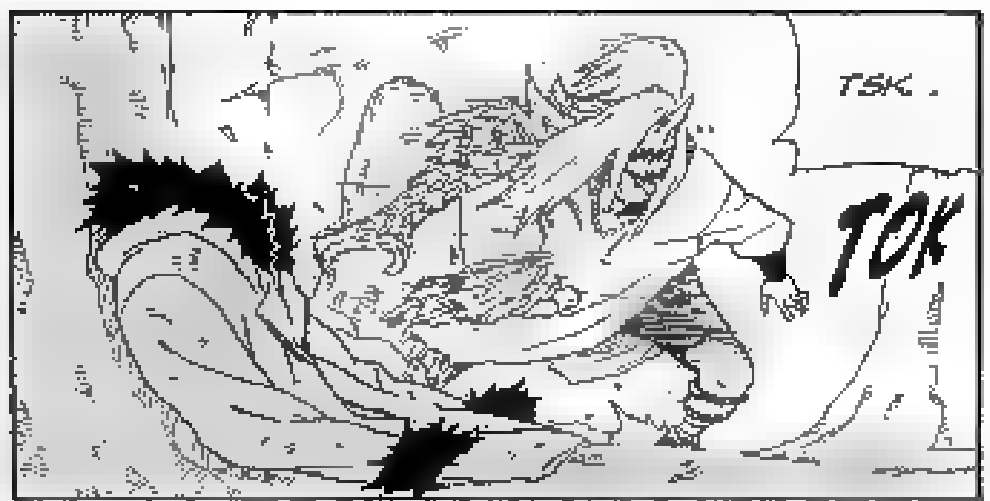
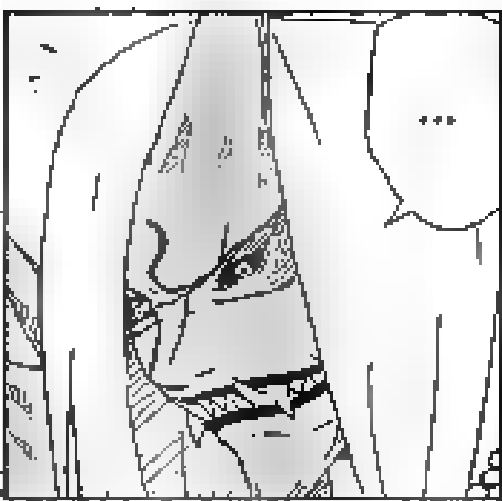
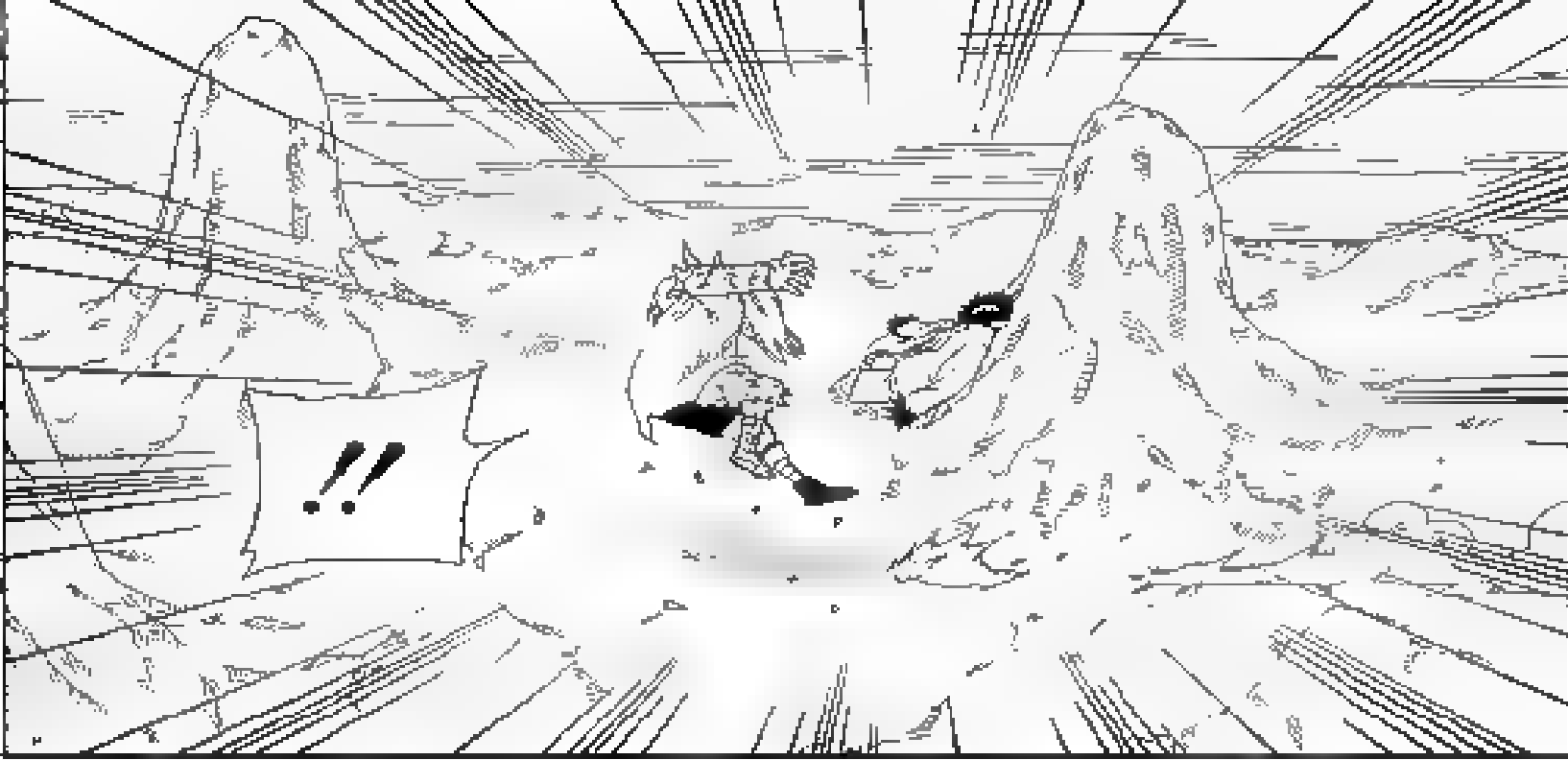
UH-OH..
BLOOD
STAINS.

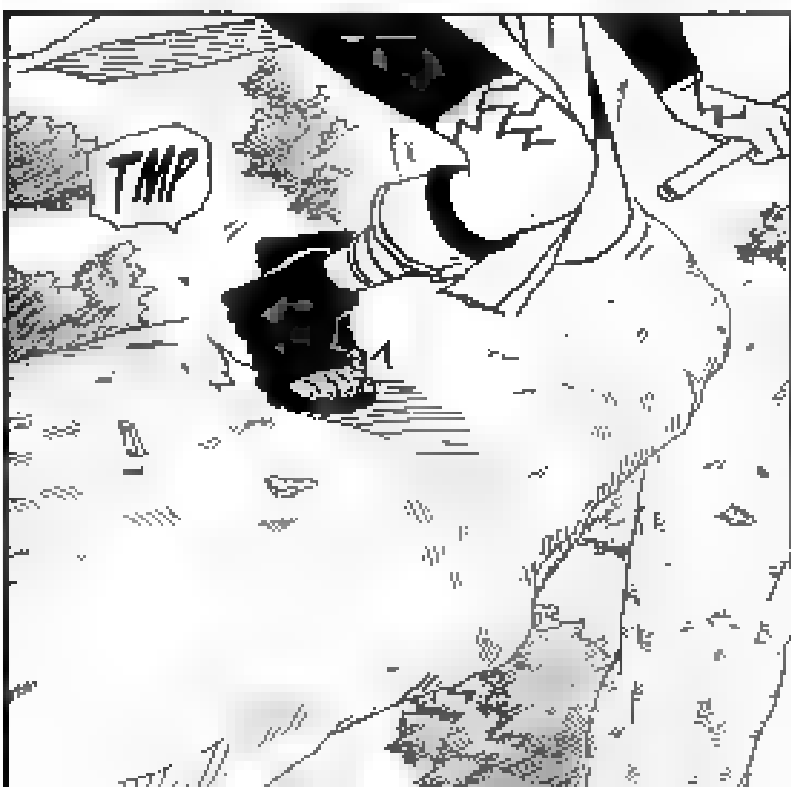
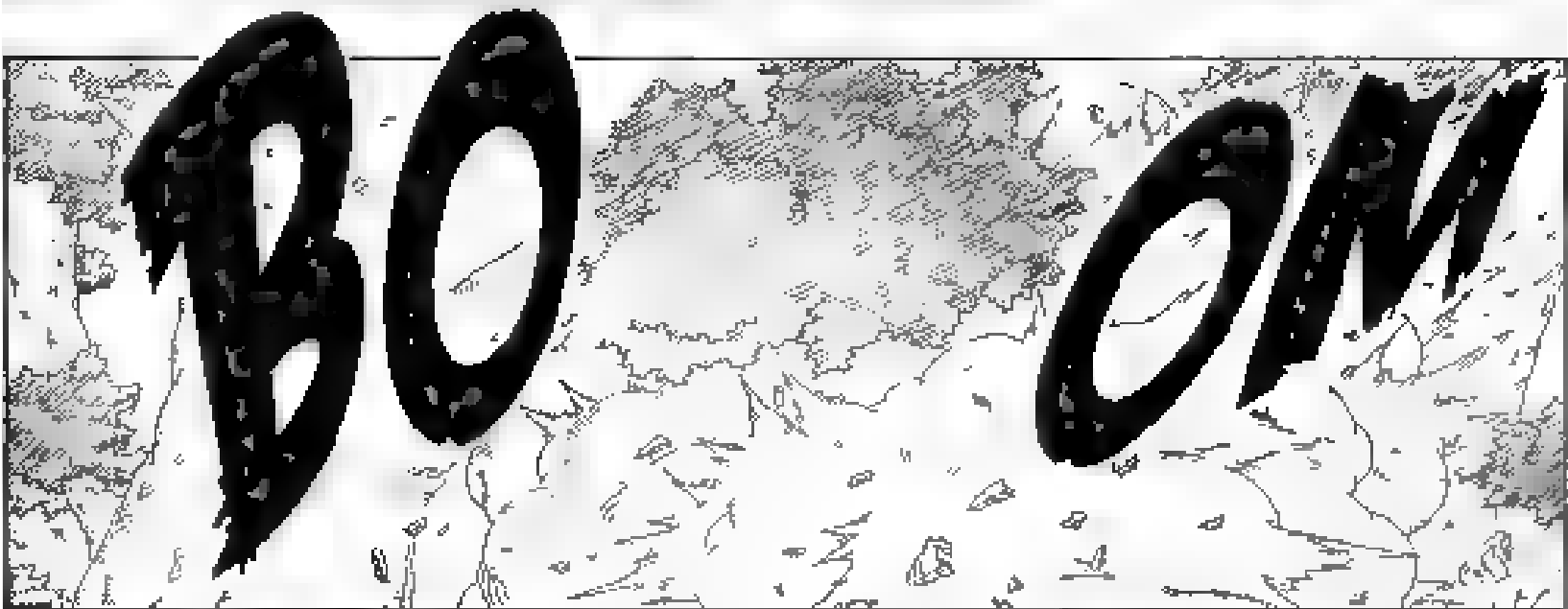
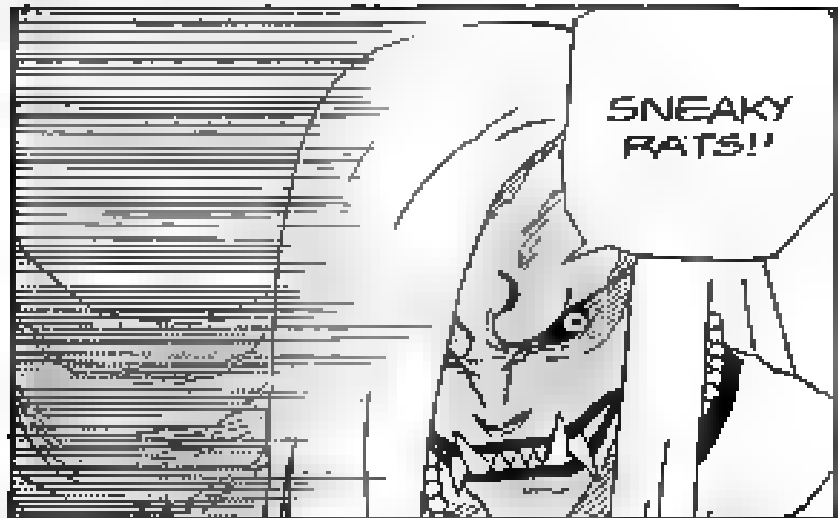
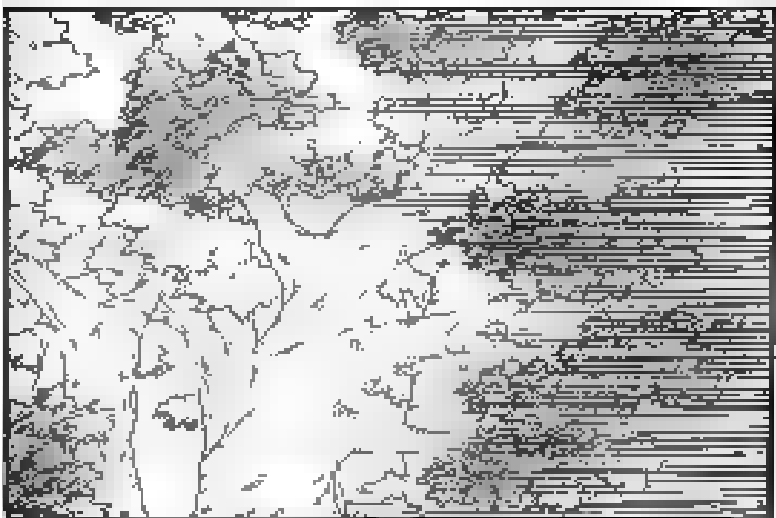


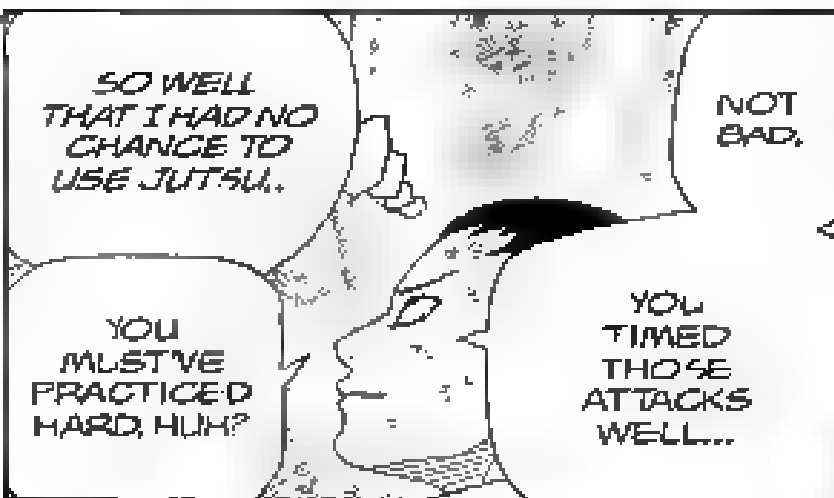
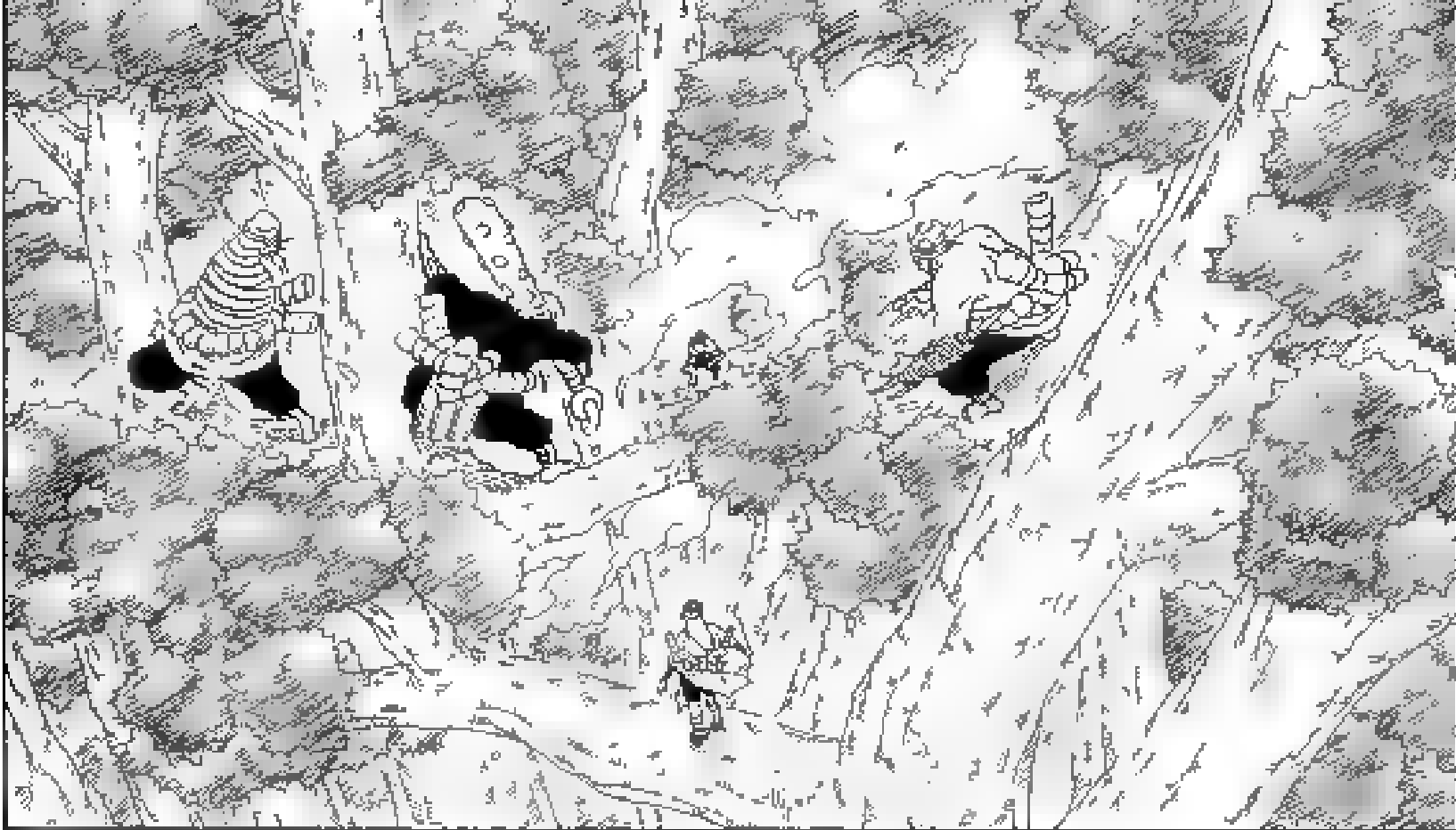












SO WELL
THAT I HAD NO
CHANCE TO
USE JUTSU..

NOT
BAD.

YOU
MUST'VE
PRACTICED
HARD, HUH?

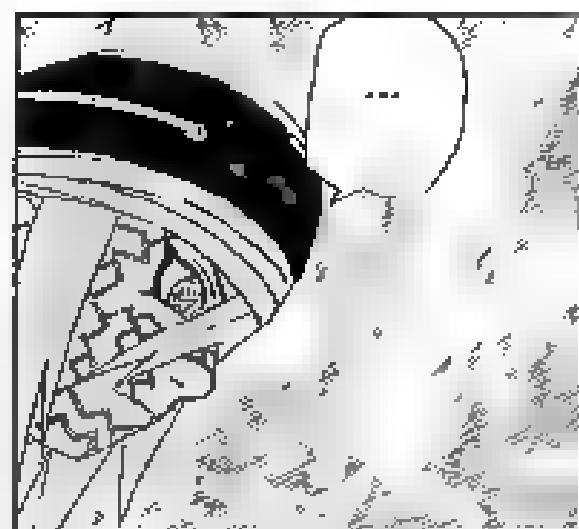
YOU
TIMED
THOSE
ATTACKS
WELL...



WELL
GOT YOU
CORNERED,
PUNK!



THAT'S
A PRETTY
COMPLICATED
MELODY.





AND THE
DIFFICULTY
OF THE
MELODY,
NOT BAD
FOR A
LITTLE PUNK.

HMM.
YOU
FIGURED
OUT THAT
I CONTROL
THEM WITH
MY FLUTE.

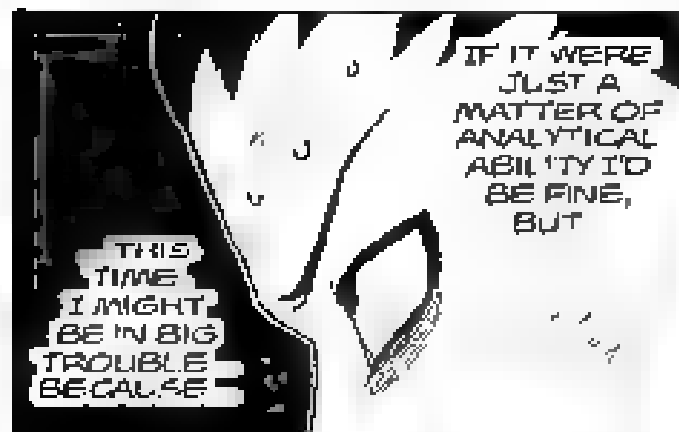


ART ISN'T
REALLY MY
STRONG
SUIT.

TRUE

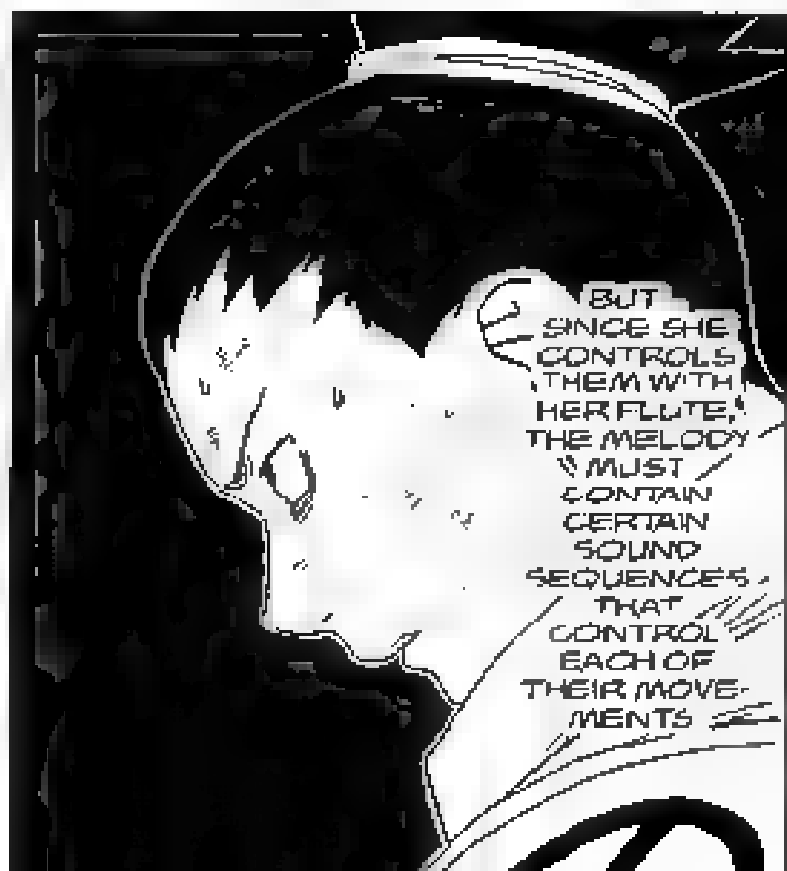


BUT
YOU CAN'T
POSSIBLY
UNDERSTAND
THIS MUSIC
COMPLETELY.



THIS
TIME
I MIGHT
BE IN BIG
TROUBLE
BECAUSE

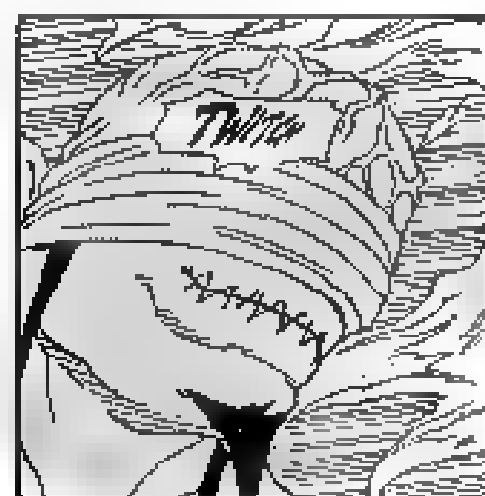
IF IT WERE
JUST A
MATTER OF
ANALYTICAL
ABILITY I'D
BE FINE,
BUT



BUT
SINCE SHE
CONTROLS
THEM WITH
HER FLUTE,
THE MELODY
MUST
CONTAIN
CERTAIN
SOUND
SEQUENCES
THAT
CONTROL
EACH OF
THEIR MOVE-
MENTS



HEH
HEH



THE
TUNE
CHANGED
...?!

?!!

SOME-
THING'S
COMING!!

THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI
MY PERSONAL HISTORY: A STORY TOO EMBARRASSING
TO WRITE DOWN, PART I

IT'S ABOUT TIME I ENDED WRITING MY PERSONAL HISTORY, BUT I'VE GOT NOTHING TO FILL OUT THIS BLANK PAGE WITH, SO I DECIDED TO CONTINUE WRITING A LITTLE BIT MORE. IT SEEMS THE MORE I WRITE, THE MORE I EMBARRASS MYSELF... BUT, I'M GOING TO WRITE AGAIN ANYWAY, AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGMENT. FIRST OF ALL, THIS STORY IS SO POINTLESS AND SILLY THAT I'VE AVOIDED WRITING IT UNTIL NOW, AND I'M NOT REALLY GUNG-HO ON WRITING IT NOW EITHER. BUT, AGAINST... MY... BETTER... JUDGMENT...

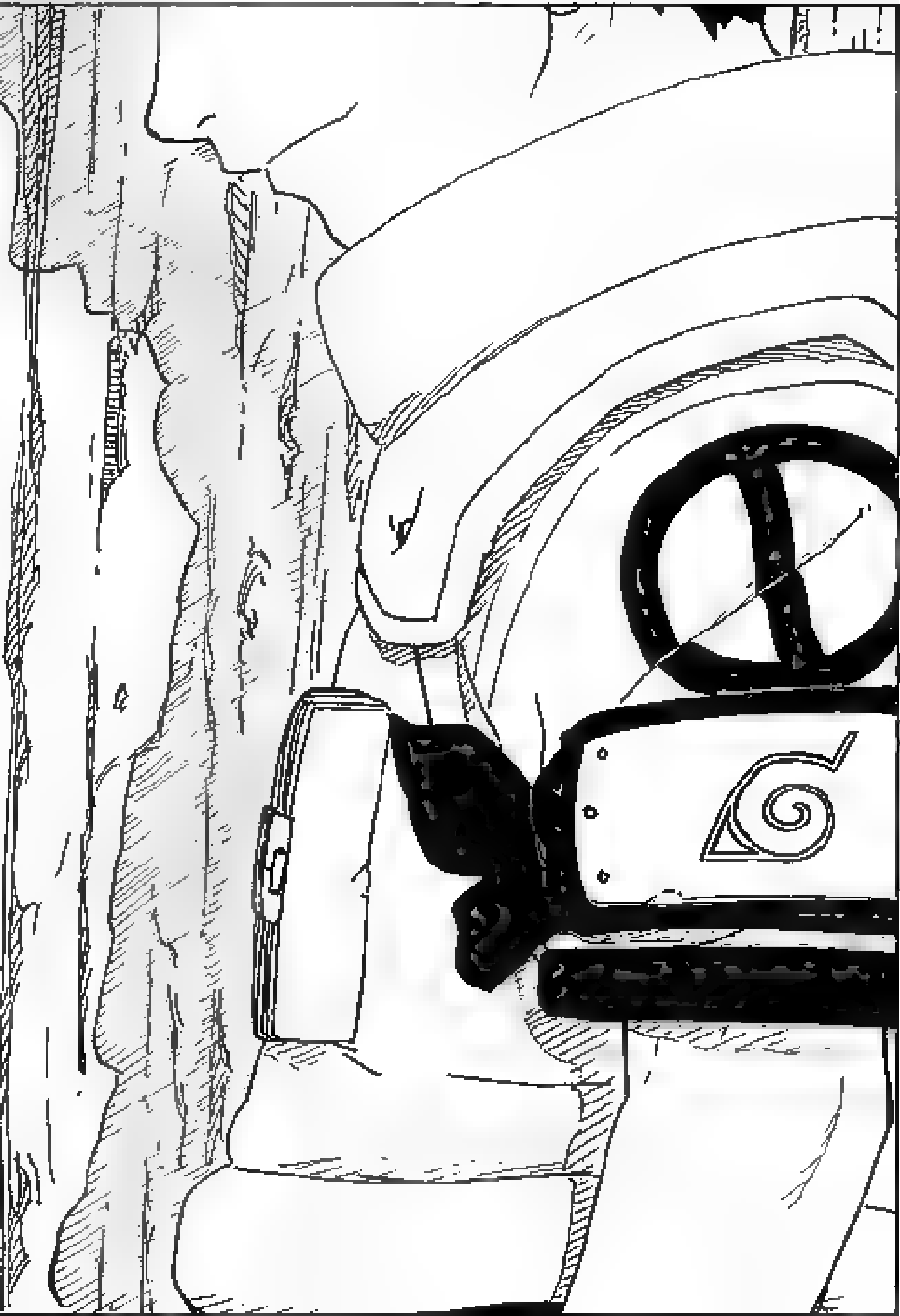
I THINK IT WAS WHEN I WAS IN THE FIRST GRADE. I WAS SO INTO THIS ONE SENTAI, SFX ACTION/ADVENTURE HERO SERIES. THE ONE I PLAYED MOST OFTEN AT THAT AGE WAS *TAND SENTAI SAN BARUKAN* (SOLAR SQUADRON SUN VULCAN). I USED TO PLAY SUN VULCAN FIGHTERS WITH MY FRIEND AND MY TWIN BROTHER A LOT. SUN VULCAN WAS A BIT DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER SENTAI SERIES. WHILE MOST SENTAI SERIES HEROES WERE MADE UP OF A CELL OF FIVE, SUN VULCAN WAS BRAVE ENOUGH TO SAVE THE EARTH WITH A CELL OF THREE. THE CELL CONSISTED OF VULEAGLE, VULSHARK AND VULPANTHER.

I'VE NEVER LIKED BEING THE LEADER, EVER SINCE I WAS A KID. SO I DECIDED TO PLAY THE ROLES OF EITHER VULSHARK OR VULPANTHER, THE SECOND OR THIRD RANKED GUYS. BUT, BECAUSE VULSHARK'S POSE LOOKED LAME TO ME, EVEN AT THAT AGE, I DECIDED TO GO WITH VULPANTHER. ...ANYWAY... WELL... UMM... I REALLY GOT INTO THE VULPANTHER CHARACTER. OR, IT WAS MORE LIKE... I ALREADY WAS VULPANTHER. BASICALLY, I WAS INTOXICATED WITH VULPANTHER. HOW MUCH SO...? TO BE CONTINUED...

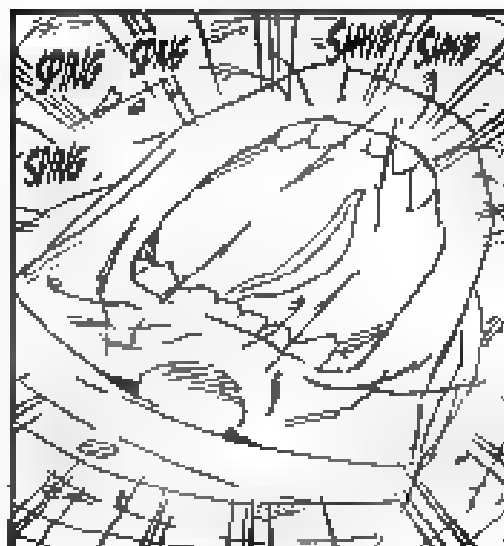
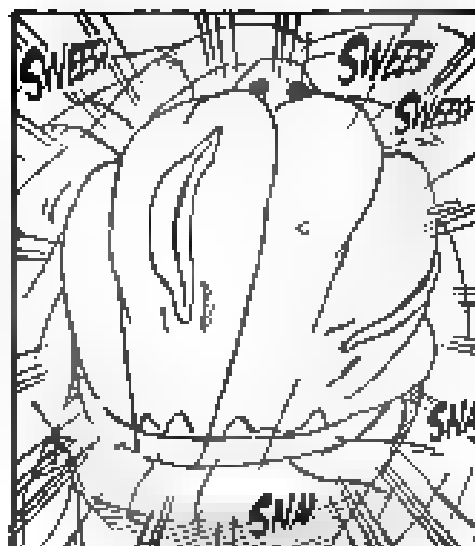
P.S. THE TRUTH SHALL BE REVEALED!



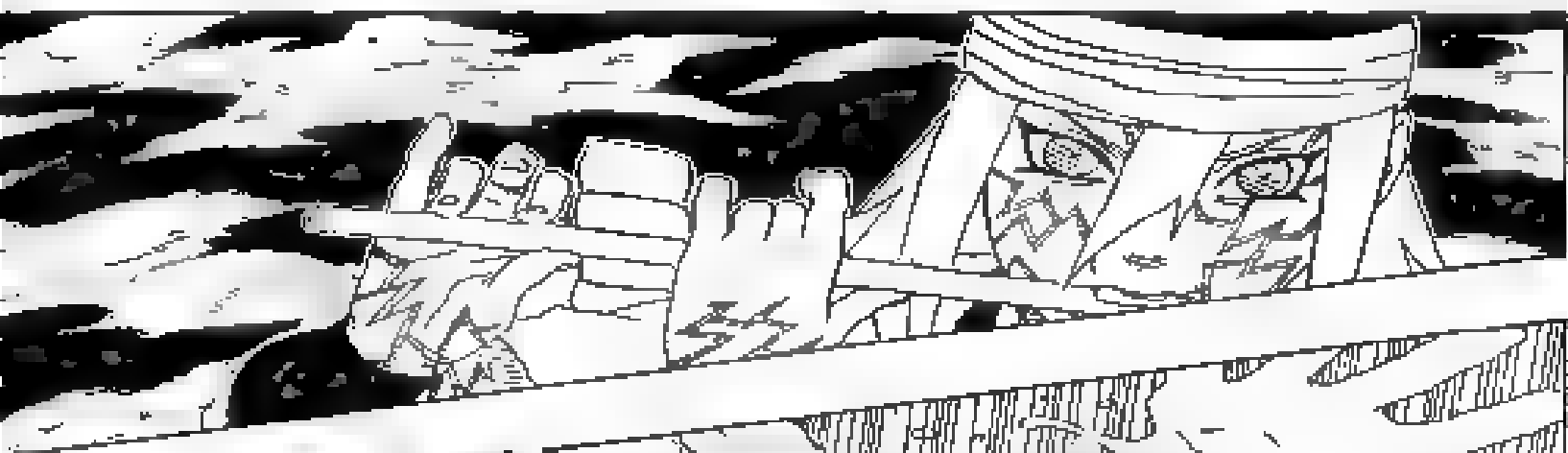
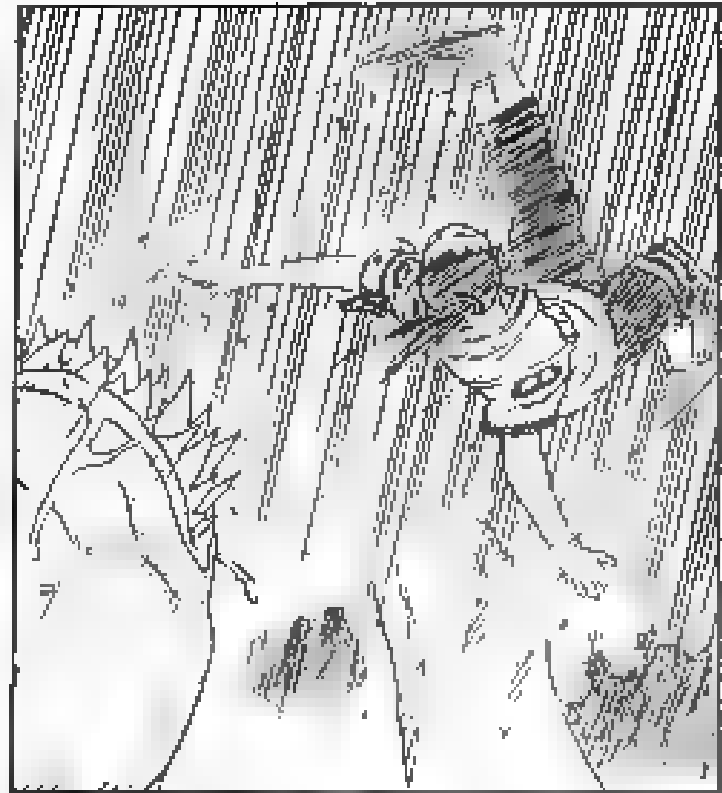
Number 207: Deadlocked

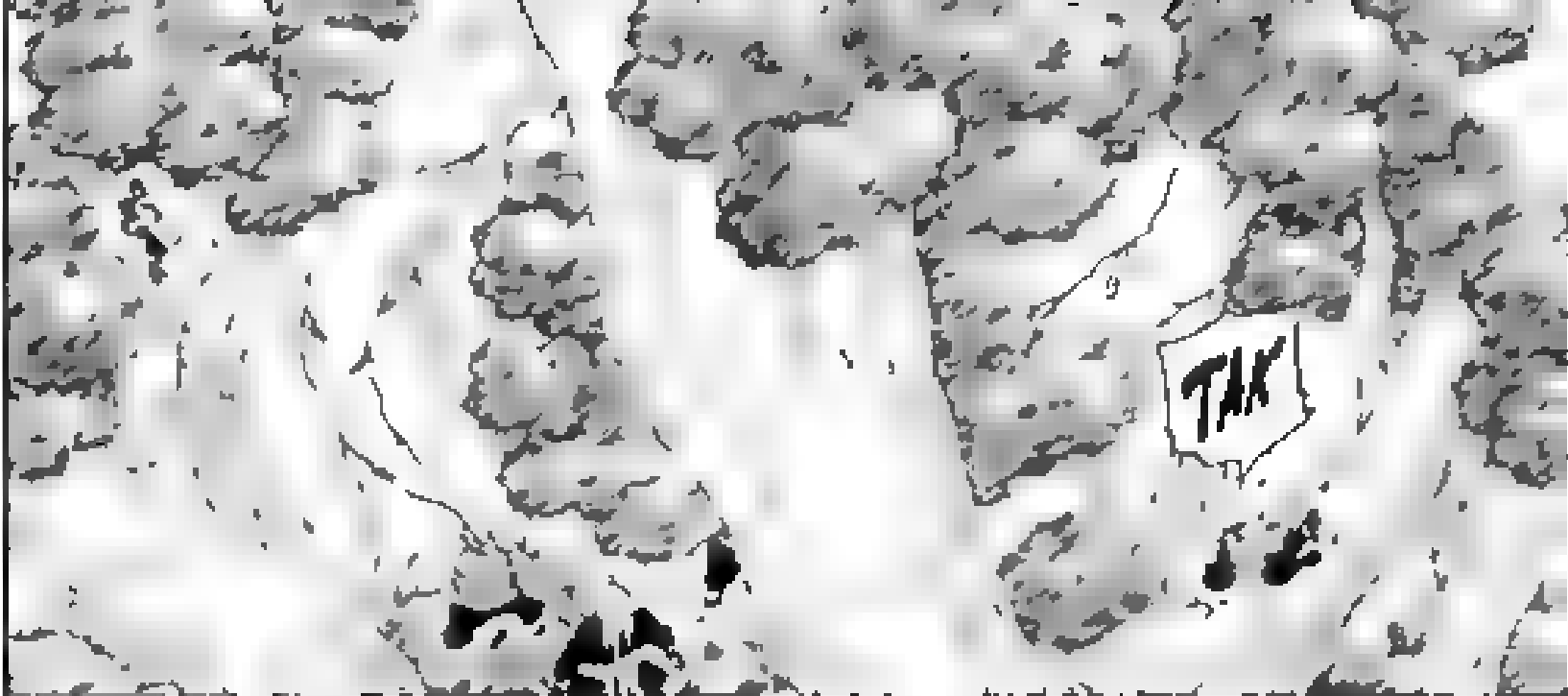


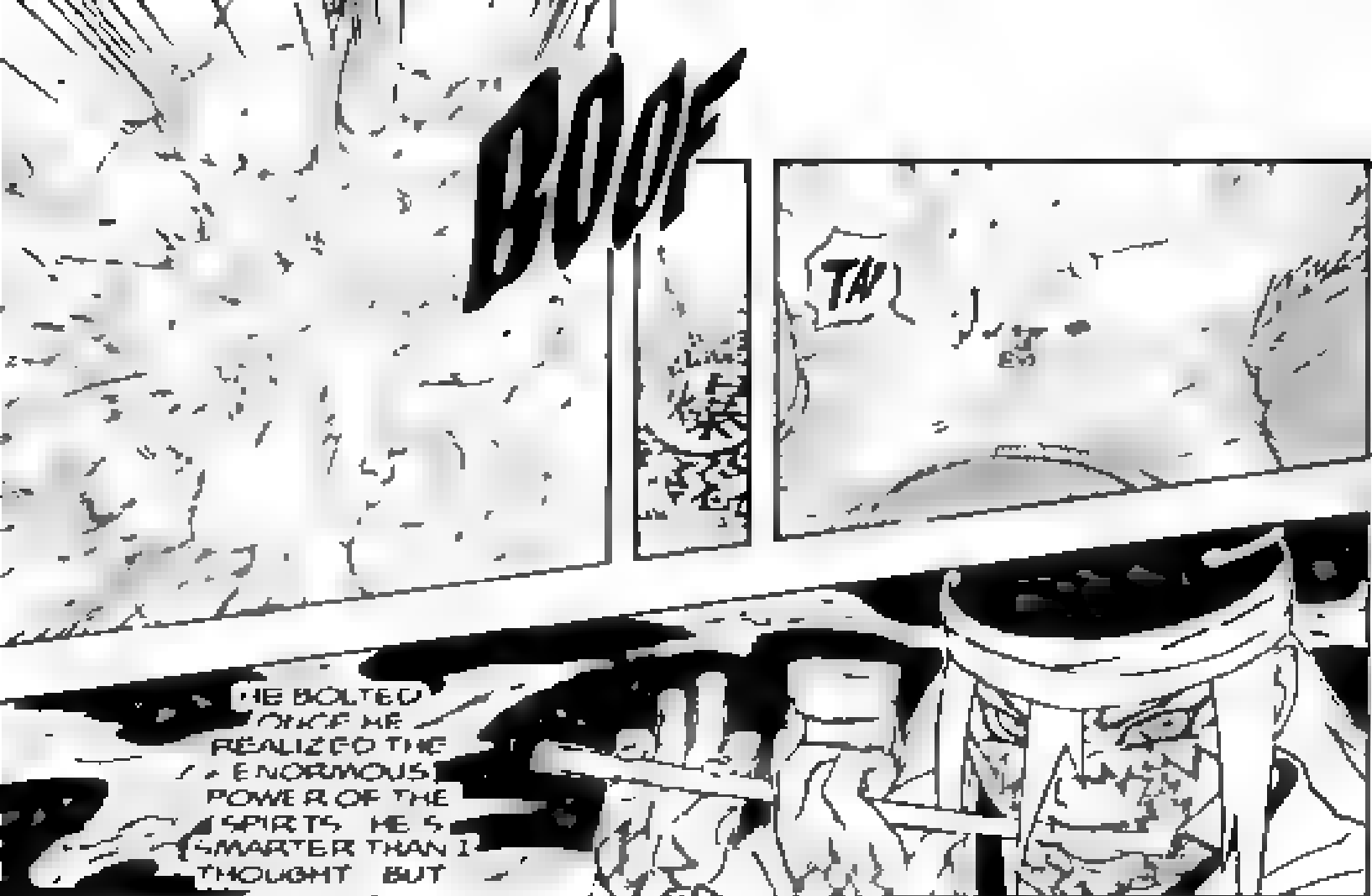












HE BOLTED
ONCE HE
REALIZED THE
ENORMOUS
POWER OF THE
SPIRITS HE'S
SMARTER THAN I
THOUGHT BUT



EVEN USING
MY TRUSTY
LETTER
BOMB AND
SMOKE BOMB
TOGETHER I
JUST BARELY
MANAGED
TO HIDE



...





BUT UNDER
THESE
CIRCUM-
STANCES
IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE
TO GET
NEAR HER

THE
QUICKEST
WAY IS TO
SILENCE
THAT
FLUTE,
THOUGH



I HAVE TO
IGNORE
THE
WHATE
THINGS
AND AIM
FOR THE
MAIN
BODIES

A SHINOBI
THAT
MAKES
SPECIAL
CHAKRA
LIKE ME...
NO DOUBT
IT'S A
SECRET
TECHNIQUE



IF I'M 55,
EVEN ONE
I'LL GET
ATTACKED
FULL BLAST
AND IT'S
GAME OVER



BUT I'LL
DIFFICULT
TO PULL OFF
WHILE BEING
ATTACKED BY
EACH OF THEM
INDIVIDUALLY

ANOTHER WAY
IS TO CAPTURE THE
BODIES OF THOSE
THREE ALL AT ONCE
WITH SHADOW
POSSESSION
TECHNIQUE

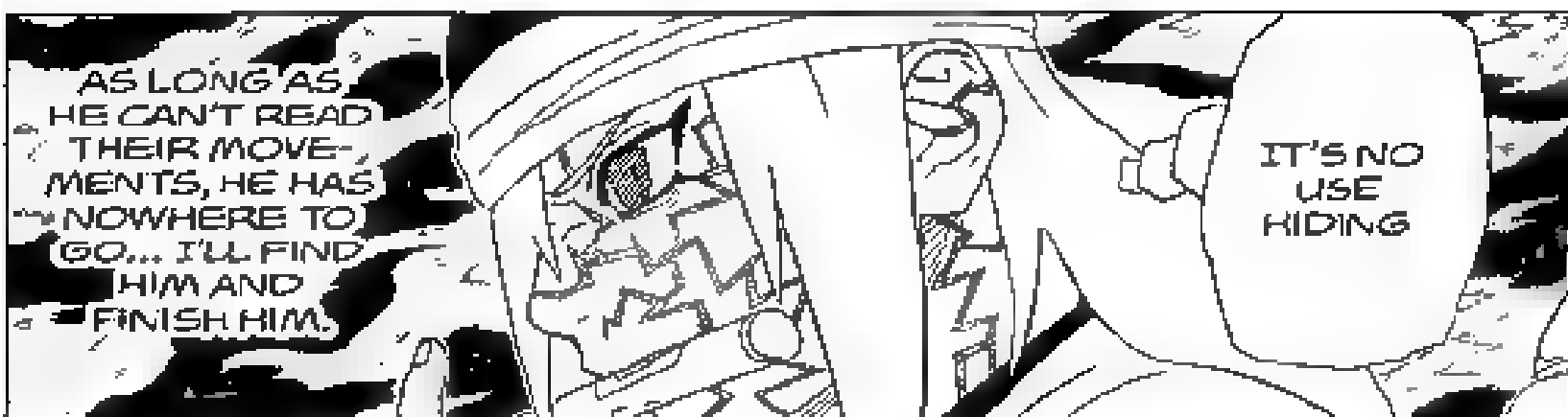


ALL THE NINJA
TOOLS I HAVE
LEFT ARE 12
KUNAI KNIVES,
NINE SHURIKEN,
12 METERS
OF WIRE, ONE
FLASH BOMB
AND ONE
LETTER
BOMB...

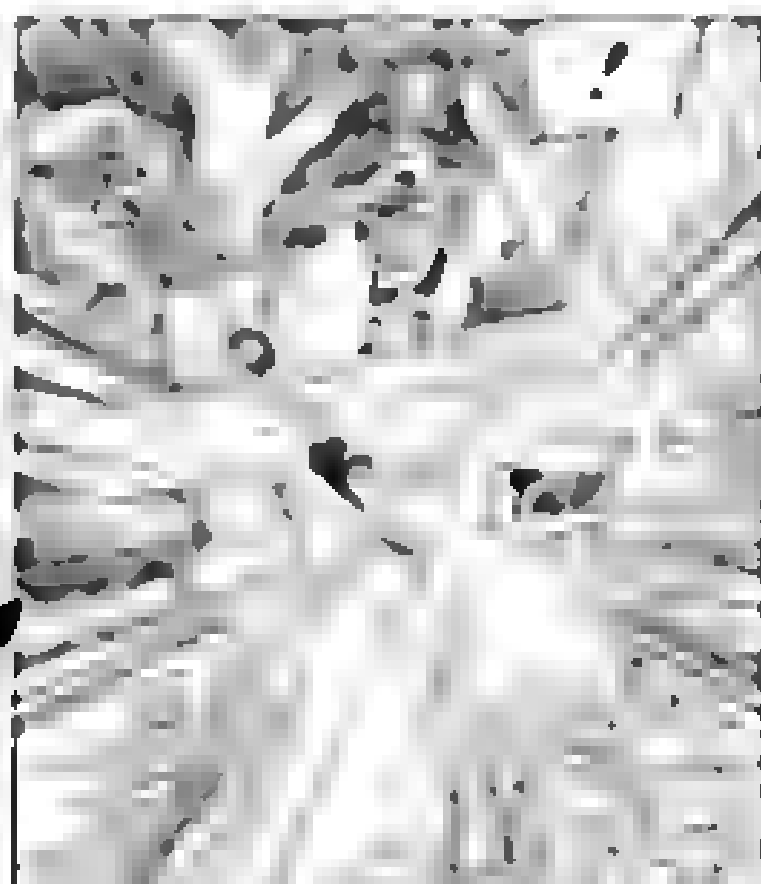
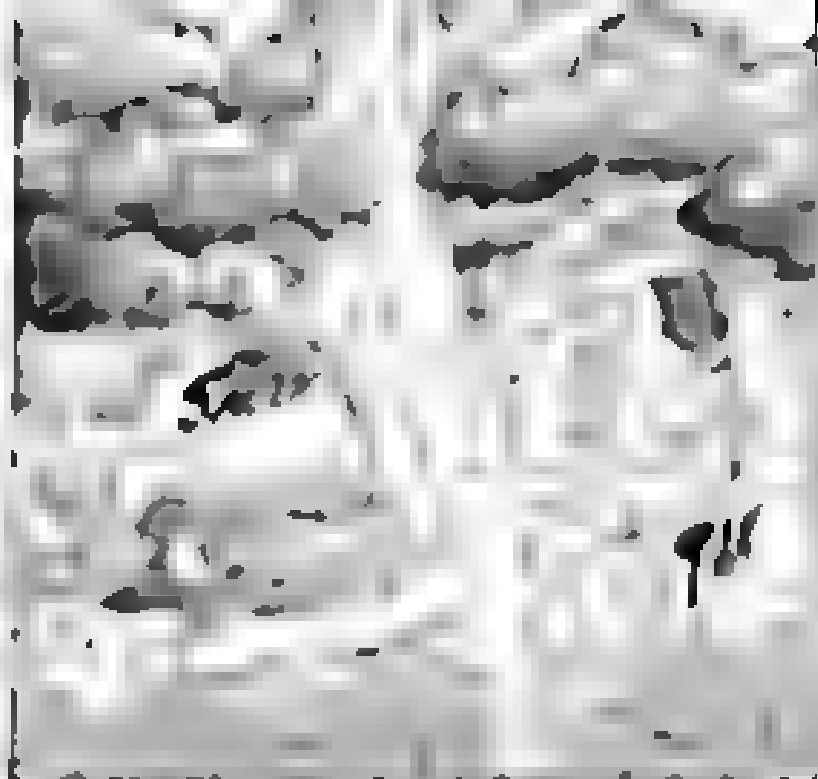


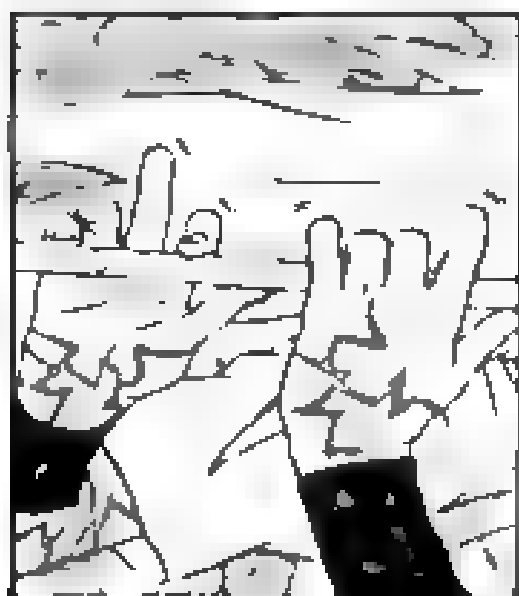
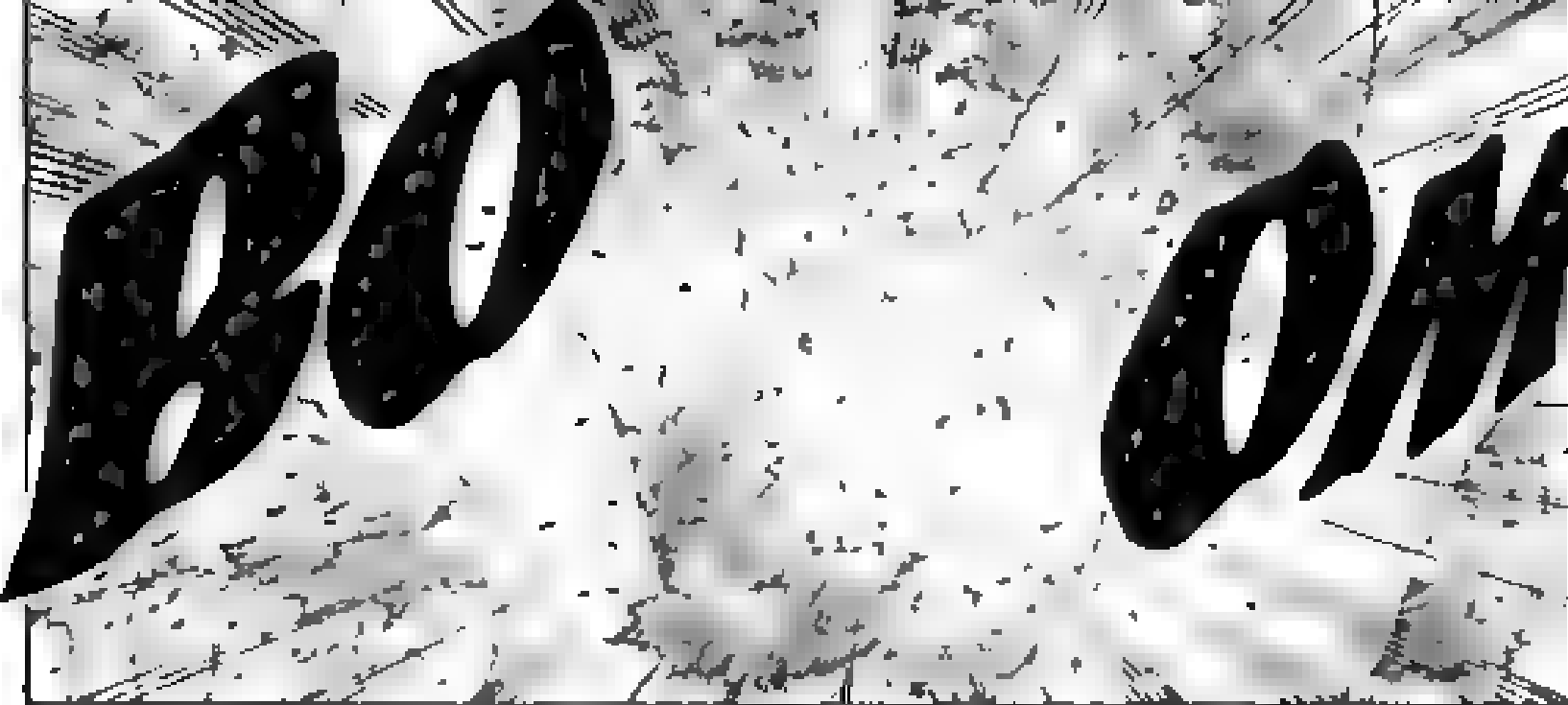
I BET
SHE SA
CHESS
WHIZ.

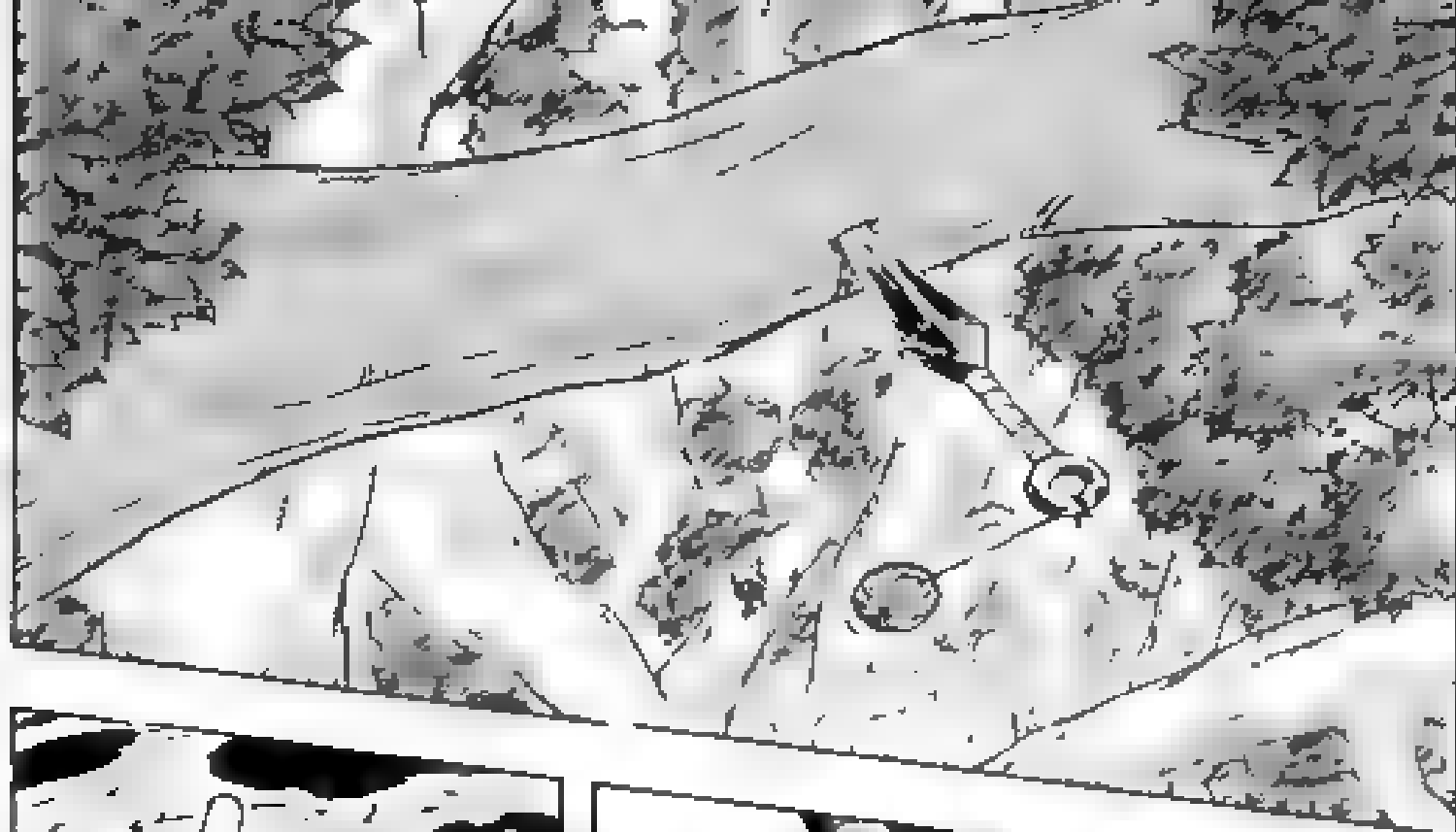
SHE
LEAVES
NO
OPENINGS,
OFFEN-
SIVELY OR
DEFEN-
SIVELY.

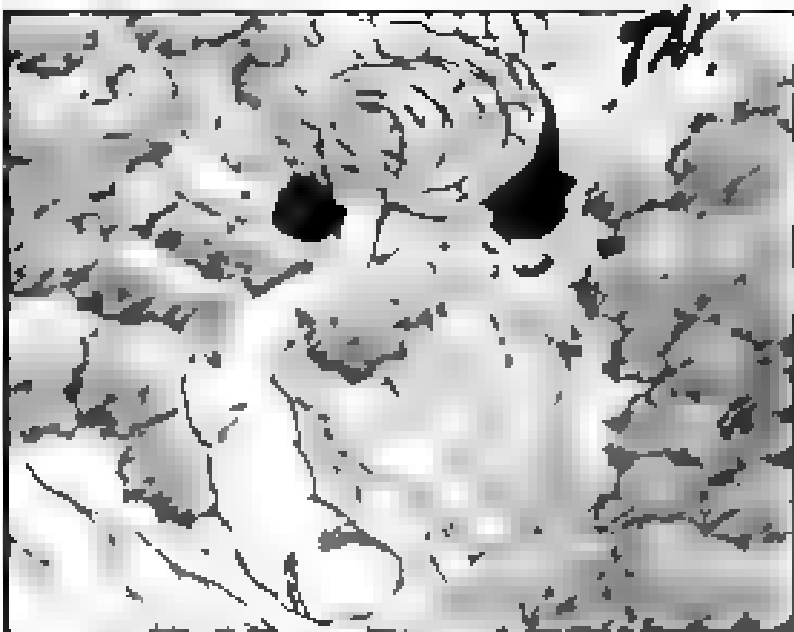
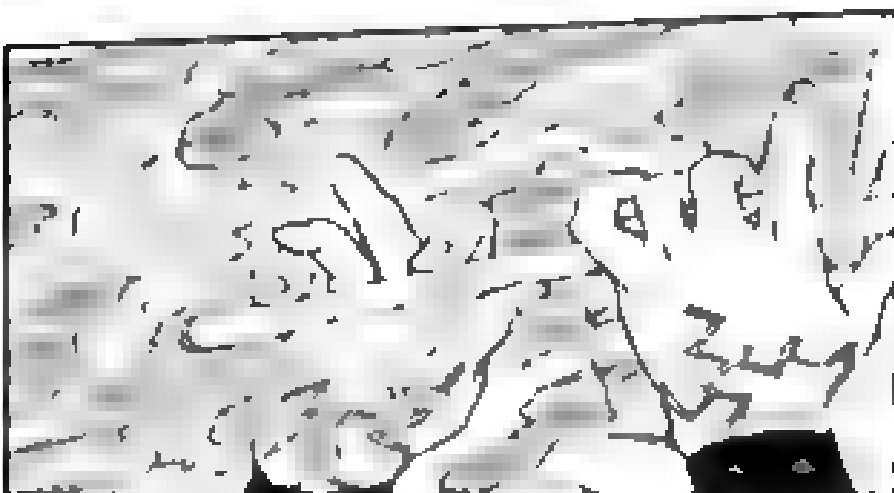


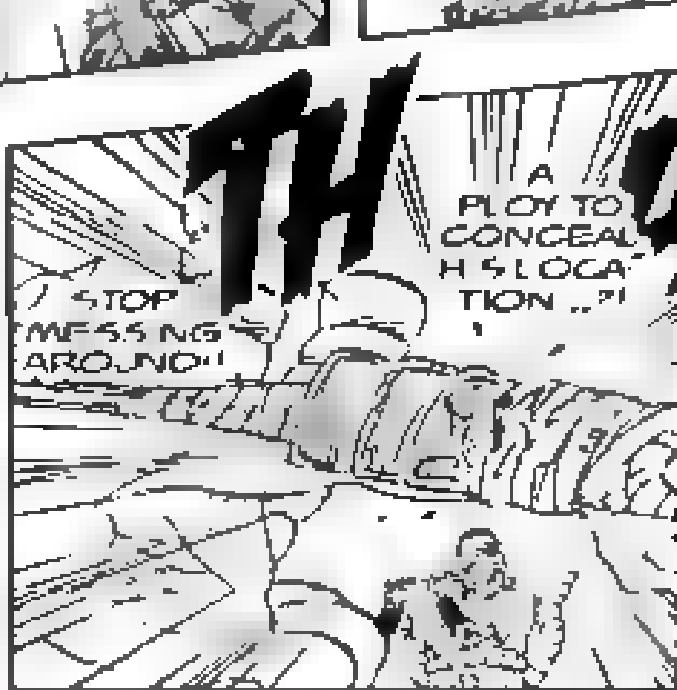
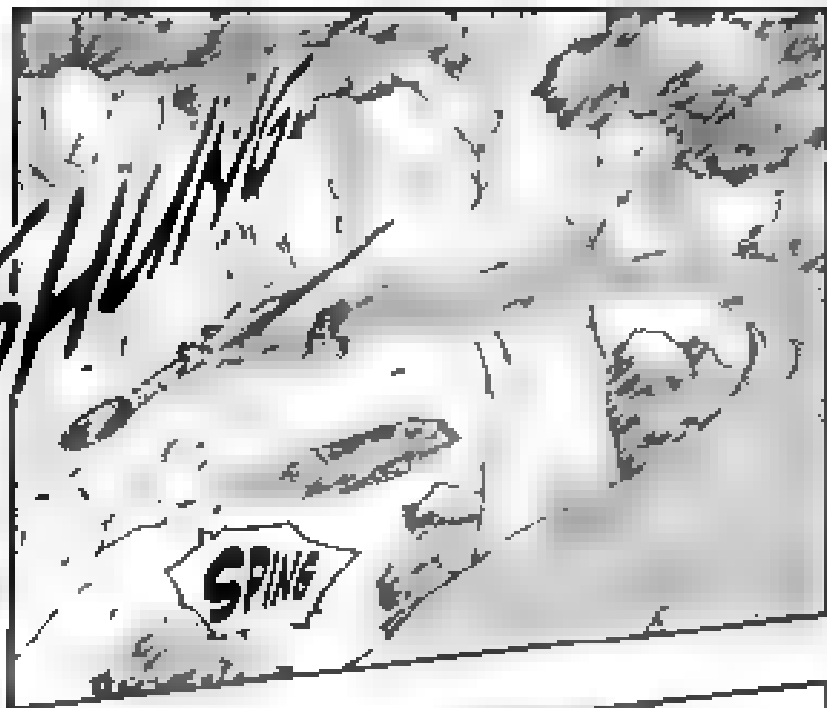
READ
THIS
WAY

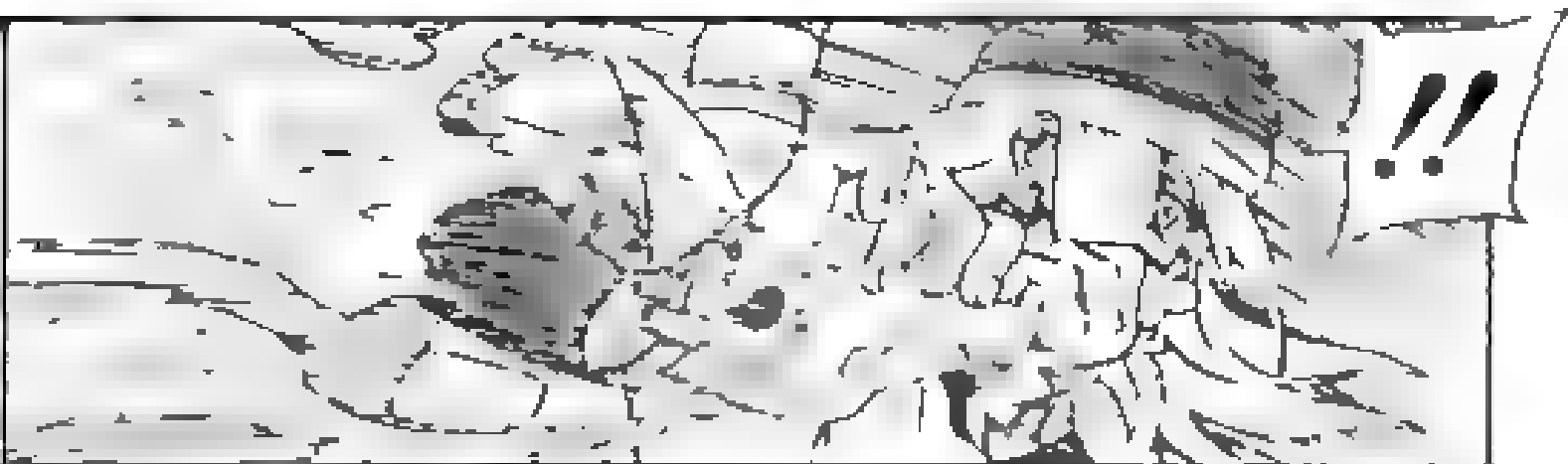
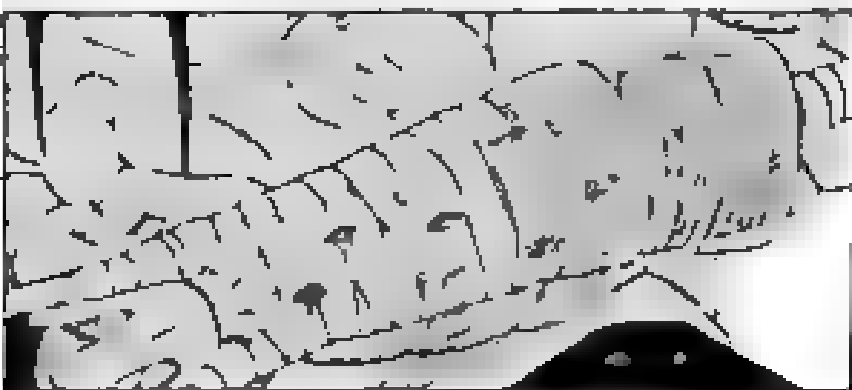
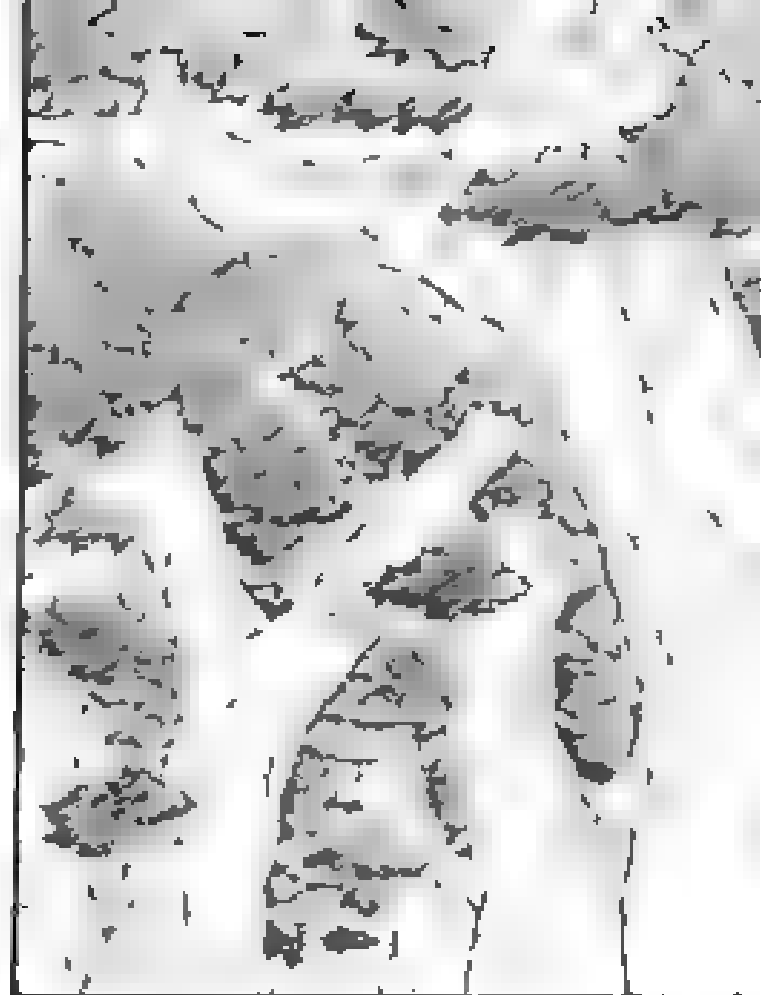
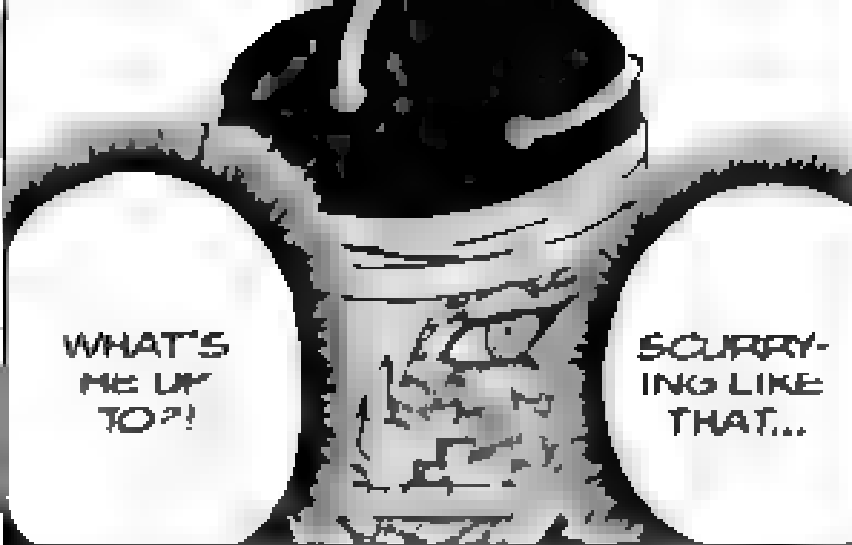


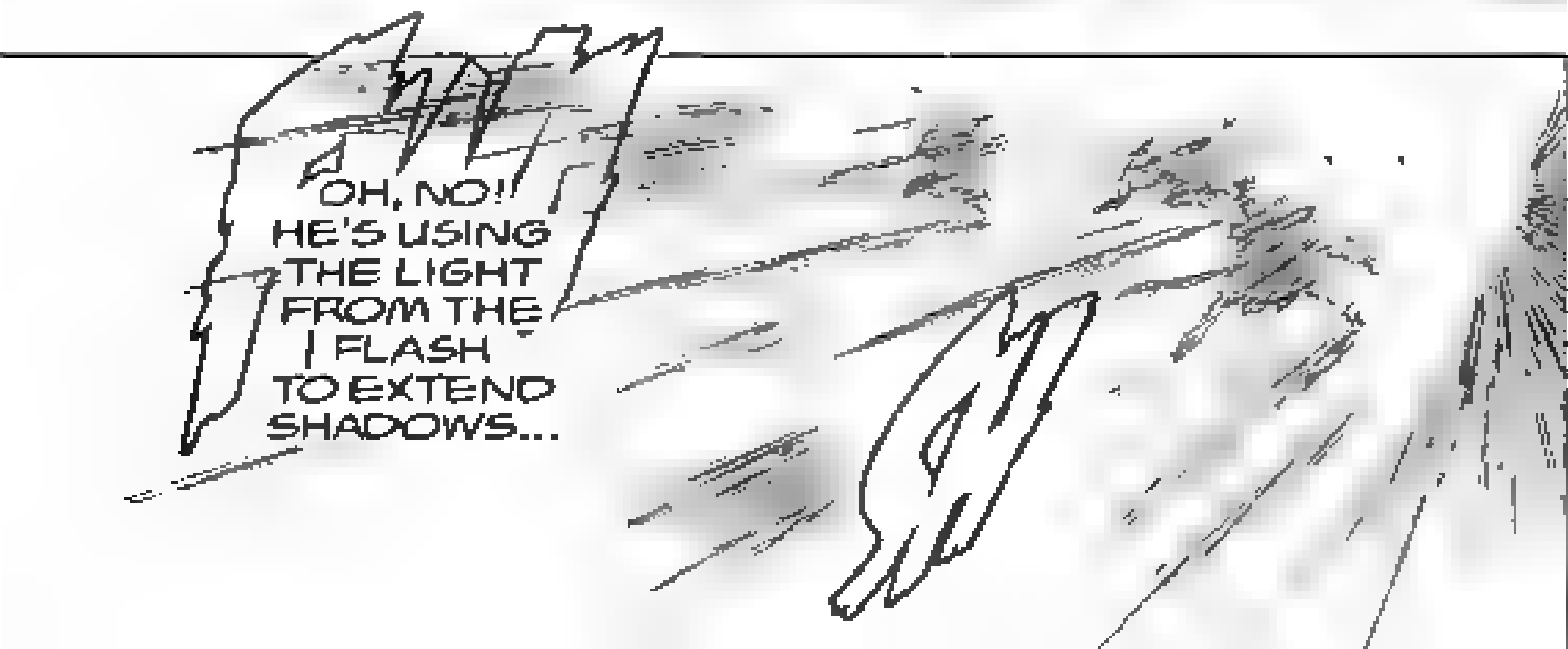
















KAGEMANE
NO JUTSU!
SHADOW
POSSESSION
TECHNIQUE!!




ZUNG

ZUNG

ZUNG



IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE
TO FIGURE
OUT THE
PATTERN IN
MY MISC..!



NO WAY
HOW DID
YOU READ
THEIR
MOVES?!



THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI
MY PERSONAL HISTORY A STORY TOO EMBARRASSING
TO WRITE DOWN, PART 2

FOR THE ALMOST ONE YEAR I DECIDED TO IDENTIFY MYSELF WITH VULPANTHER, I ENCOUNTERED MANY DIFFICULTIES. VULPANTHER IS YELLOW BOTTOM LINE, HE'S SYMBOLIZED BY THE COLOR YELLOW! SO, WHENEVER I HAD TO CHOOSE A COLOR, I CHOSE YELLOW! ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING HAD TO BE YELLOW!

VULPANTHER WORE A YELLOW JACKET SO, OF COURSE, I WORE YELLOW CLOTHES BUT THE YELLOW CLOTHES LOOKED WORSE THAN I THOUGHT.

VULPANTHER IS (SYMBOLIZED BY) CURRY BOTTOM LINE, HE LOVES CURRY AND RICE! SO, EVERY TIME SOMEONE ASKED ME, "WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?" OF COURSE I ANSWERED "CURRY AND RICE!" ... FOR SOME REASON, IN THIS KIND OF SENTAI SERIES, MANY CHARACTERS WHOSE SYMBOLIC COLOR WAS YELLOW LIKED CURRY AND RICE. THE YELLOW RANGER OF THE GO RANGERS (MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS IN ENGLISH) WAS NO EXCEPTION.

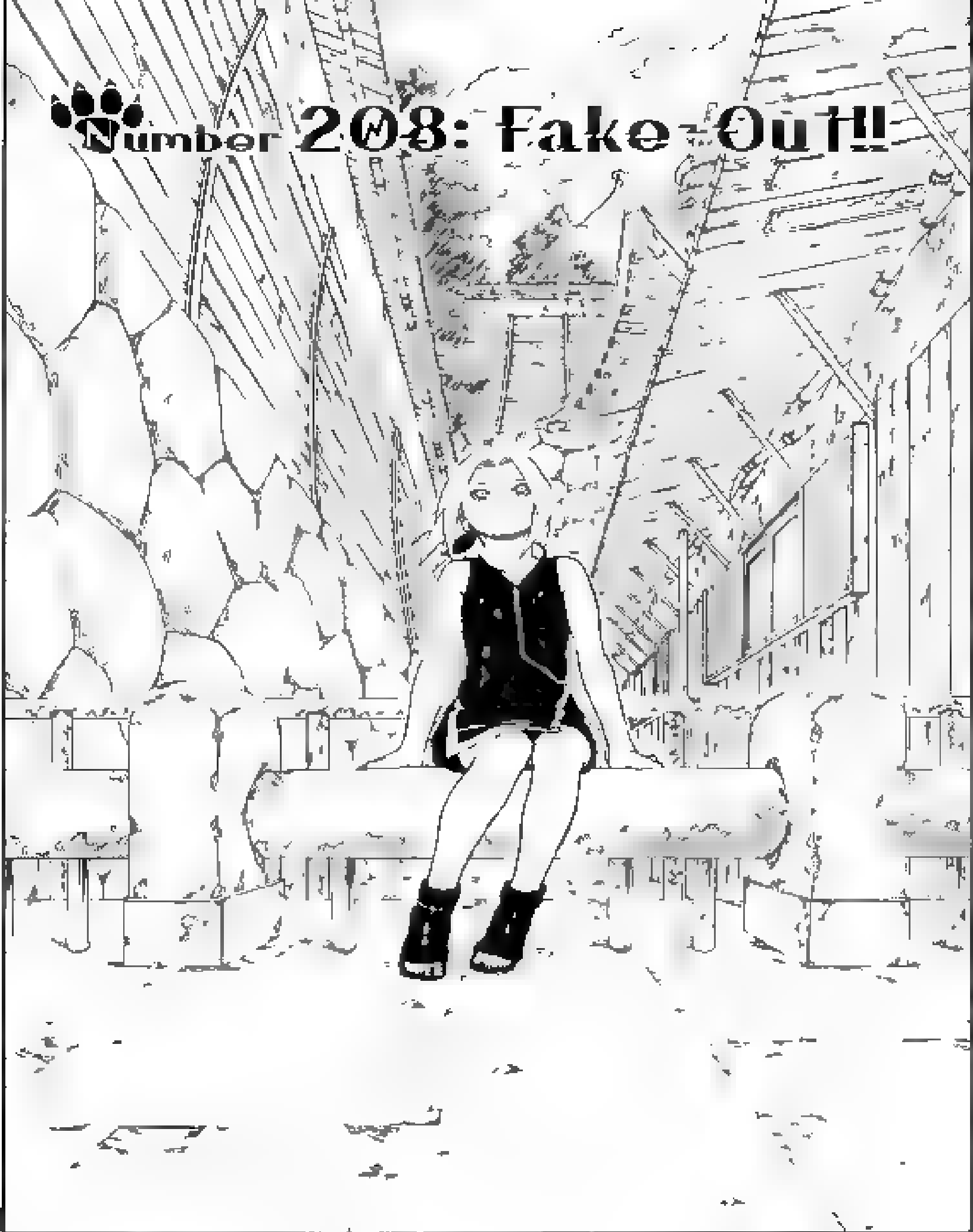
VULPANTHER IS A CHARACTER THAT EATS TONS OF CURRY AND RICE AND ALWAYS ASKS FOR SECONDS. HE PILES UP PLATES ONE AFTER ANOTHER, EATING AS FAST AS WANKO SOBA SPEED-EATERS. AS FAR AS I CAN REMEMBER, HE WOULD PILE UP ABOUT 20 PLATES. BASICALLY, ONE LOOK AT HIM REVEALED CLEARLY THAT HE LOVED CURRY AND RICE.

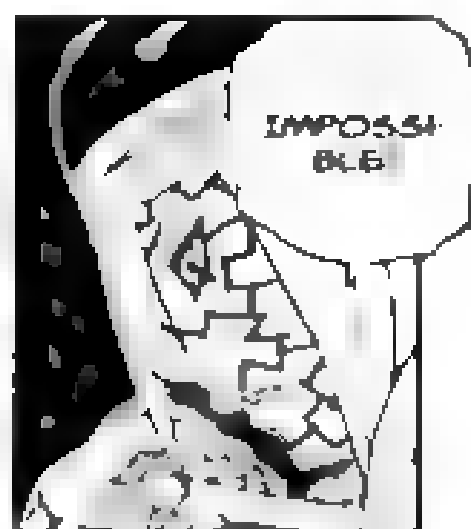
SO YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW EXCITED I GOT ON DAYS WHEN CURRY AND RICE WAS SERVED FOR DINNER!! A WANNABE VULPANTHER DEFINITELY HAD TO ASK FOR SECONDS NO MATTER WHAT, EVEN WHEN HE FELT LIKE THROWING UP OR THAT HIS STOMACH WAS GOING TO BURST. THEN I WOULD SAY TO MY MOTHER, "SECONDS, PLEASE! NEXT PLATE!" MY MOTHER WOULD SAY, "...? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!" IF YOU WANT SECONDS, PUT IT ON THE SAME PLATE YOU HAVE NOW!! NO NEED TO DIRTY ANOTHER PLATE!!" I THOUGHT, "...CAN'T ARGUE WITH THAT..."

VULPANTHER ALSO CLIMBS WALLS HE HAS SHARP CLAWS AND CAN CLIMB NO MATTER WHAT, EVEN IF THE WALL IS PERPENDICULAR TO THE GROUND! OF COURSE, I HAD TO CLIMB ANY PERPENDICULAR WALL I SAW WHEN PLAYING SUN VULCAN. ...EVEN I, AS A FIRST GRADER, KNEW THAT NO ONE COULD CLIMB A PERPENDICULAR WALL. BUT, IN FRONT OF VULEAGLE AND VULSHARK, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GO FOR IT. AS I RAN TOWARD THE WALL, I THOUGHT, "...HONESTLY, PLAYING VULPANTHER IS TOUGH" ...JUMP!! AND SPLAT, I FLATTENED MYSELF AGAINST THAT WALL! SCRATCH! "OUCH!!" ...MY FINGERNAILS GOT TORN OFF. ...FROM THAT DAY FORWARD, I QUIT PLAYING VULPANTHER.



Number 208: Fake Out!!





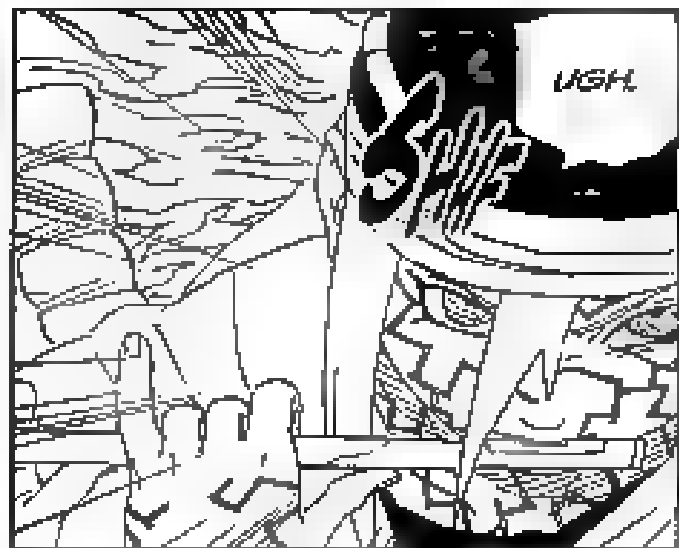
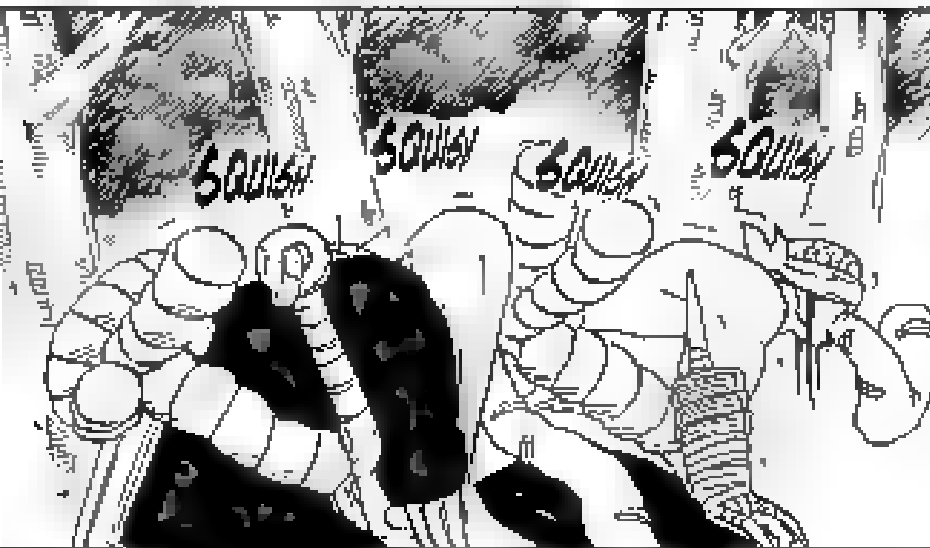
I CAREFULLY
EXAMINED THE
MOVEMENTS
OF EACH OF
YOUR FINGERS
AND THOSE
THREE

THAT'S
HOW I WAS
ABLE TO
ANALYZE AND
MEMORIZE
THEM.

WHILE YOU
WERE BUSY
DODGING
MY ATTACK
AND
SEARCHING
FOR ME

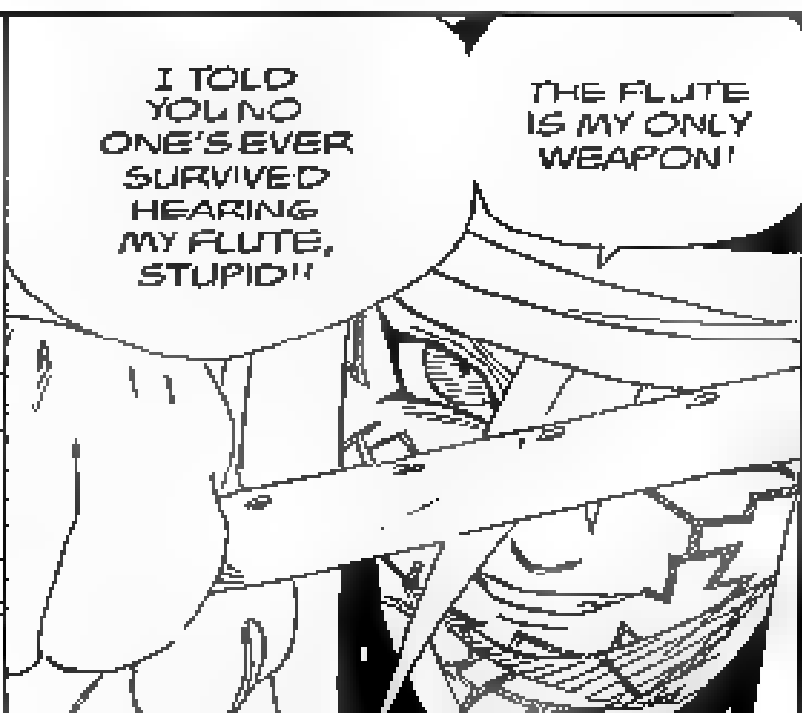
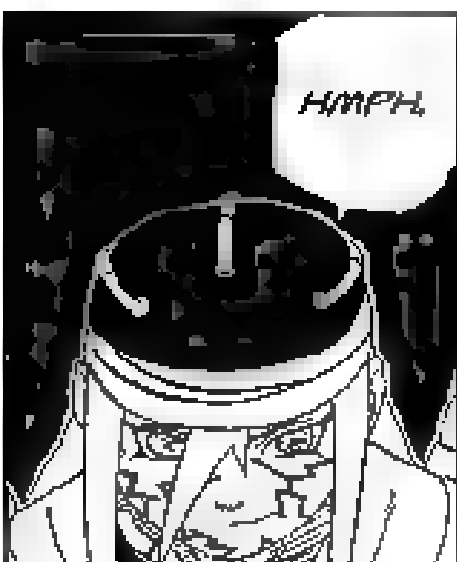
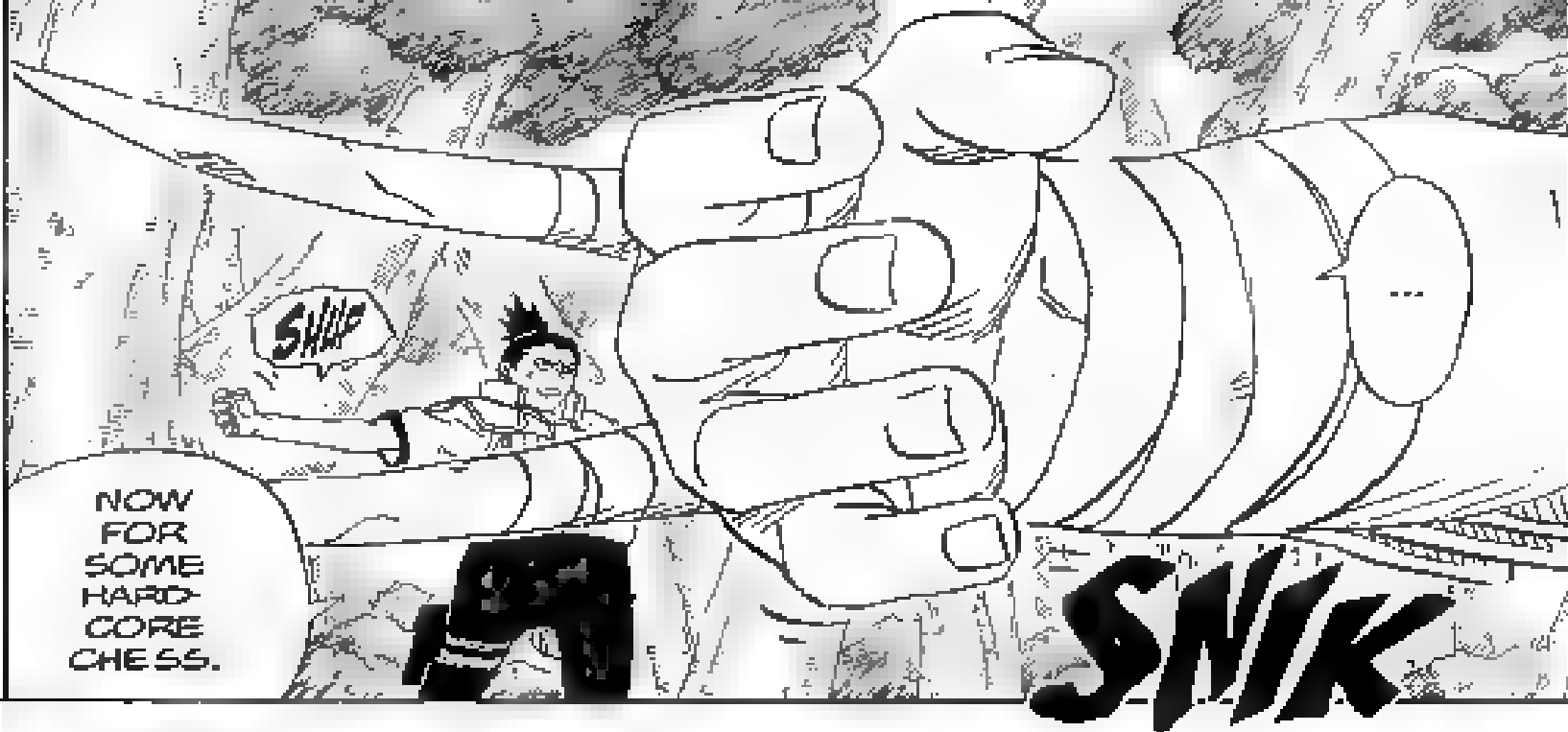
...THE
GUY IN THE
MIDDLE
BENDS
FORWARD.

AND
YOUR LEFT
MIDDLE
FINGER AND
PINKY WITH
THE MELODY
THOSE
FINGERS
PLAY..



THEY'RE
BOUND WITH
MY SHADOW
POSSESSION
TECHNIQUE.

IT'S
USE-
LESS



FROM

0.1

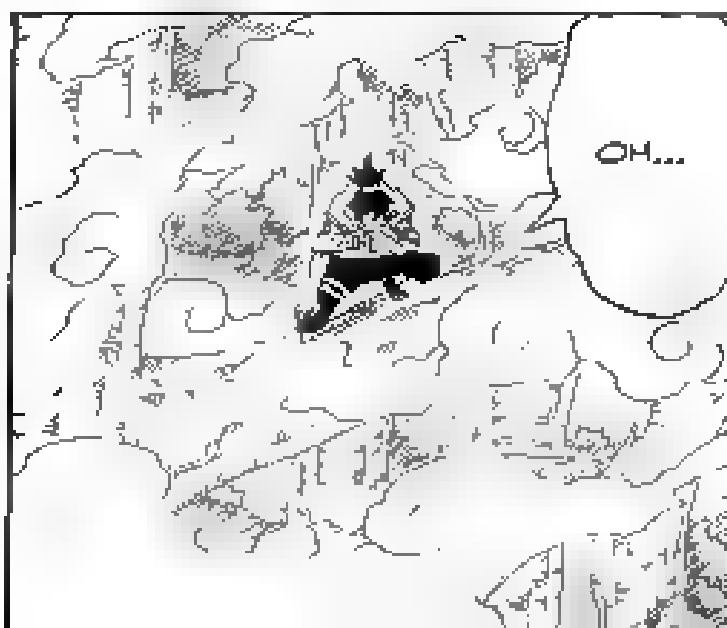
5.1

5.1

5.1

5.1

THE
DISCERN







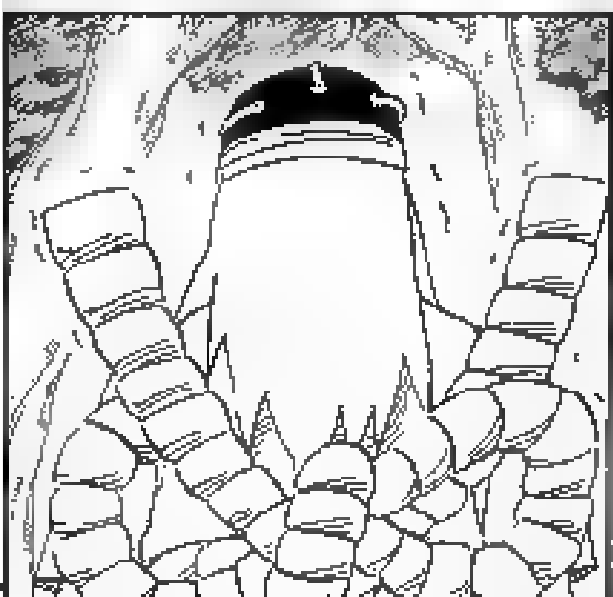
THEY
WERE
ONLY
DECOYS.

I TOLD
YOU I'D
CORNER
YOU WITH
MY PAWNS.

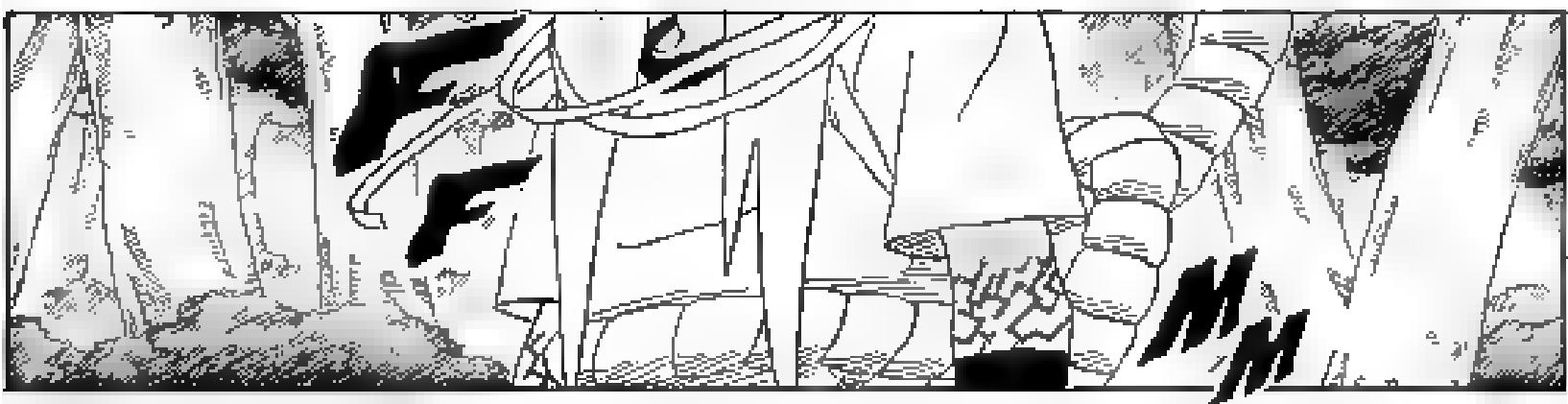


AND THE
SECOND
MOVE
HITS THE
TARGET.
BASIC
STRATEGY,
GET IT?

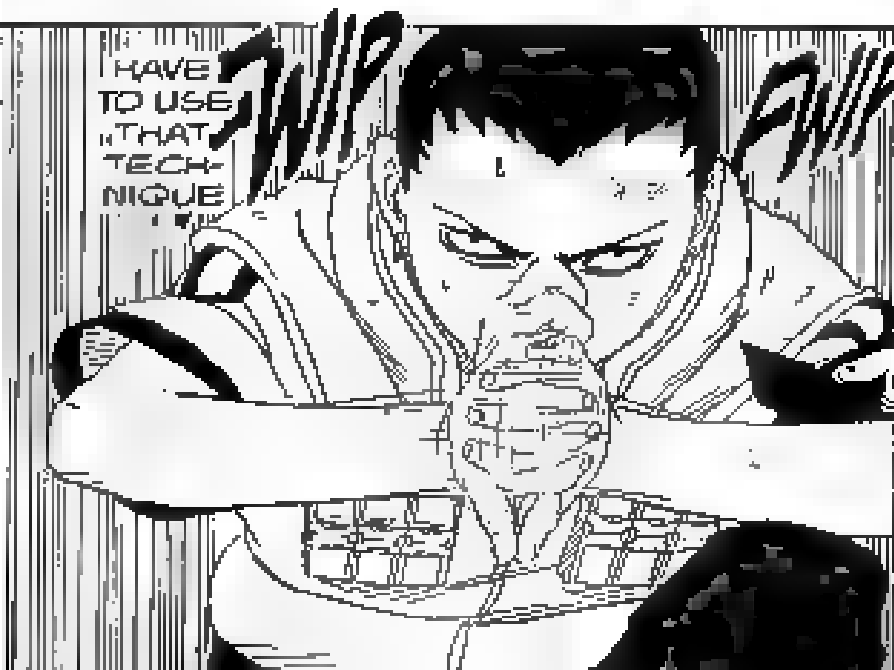
THE
FIRST
MOVE
IS A
FAKE-
OUT.



PUNK
...!



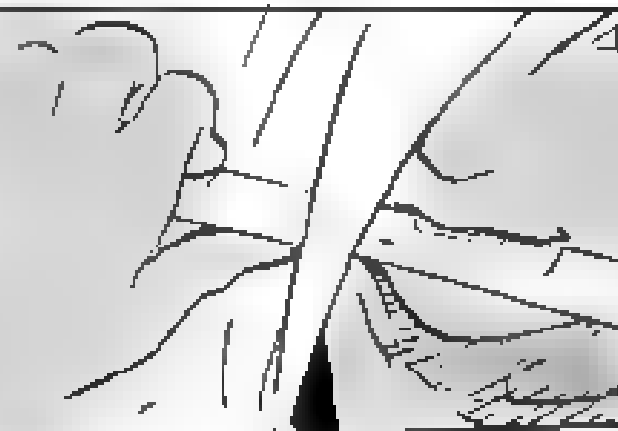


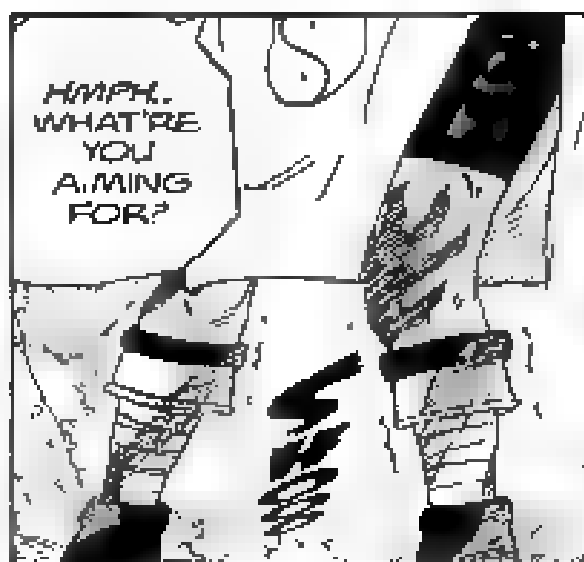


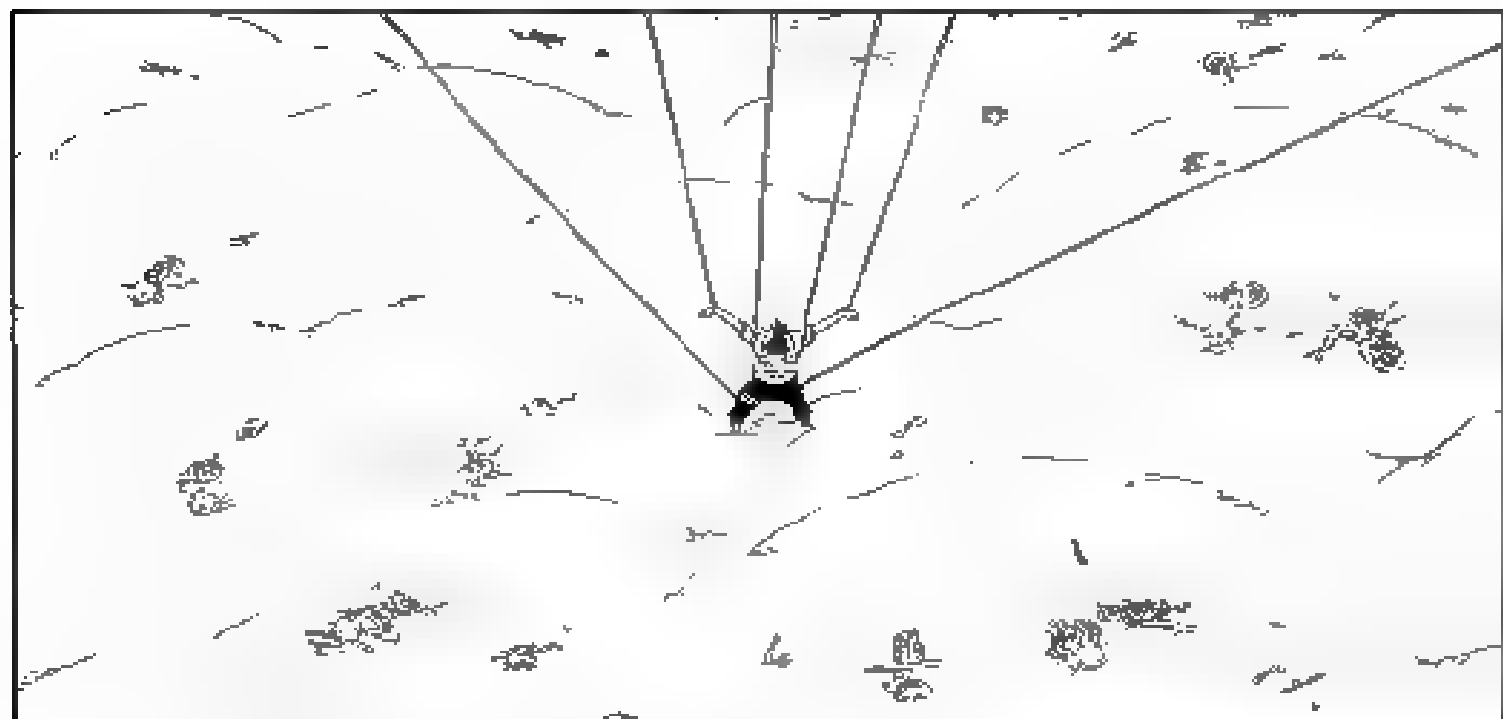




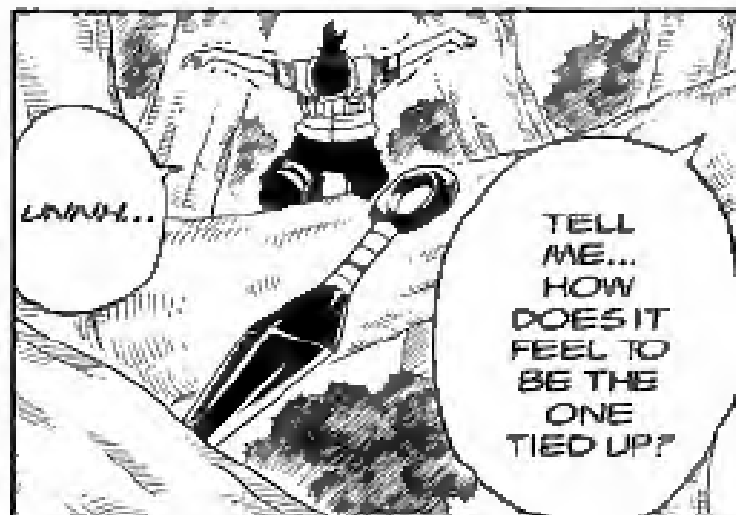
MUSICAL
GENJUTSU!
CHAINS OF
FANTASIA!!

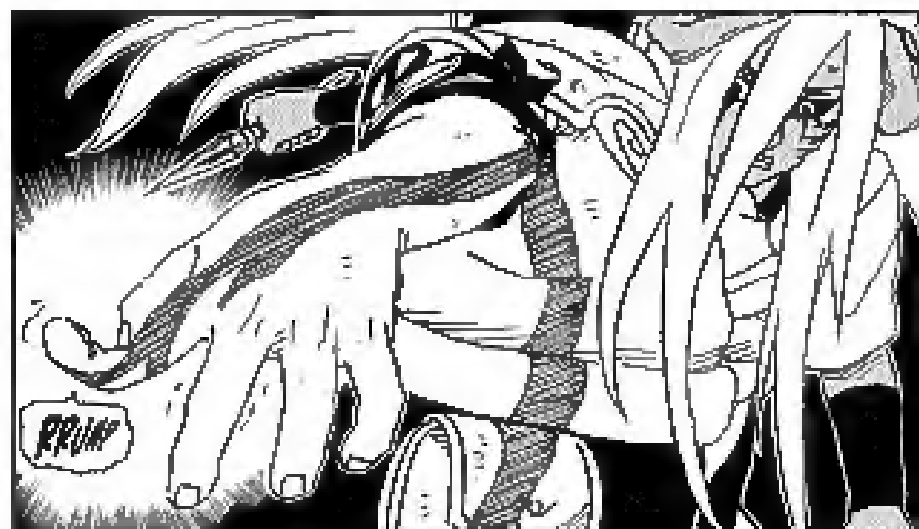














NO... NOT
EXACTLY.
THE MOST
CARELESS
MISTAKE YOU
MADE WAS
SAYING THAT
THE FLUTE'S
YOUR ONLY
WEAPON.



WITH THE
ART OF
SUFFOCATING
DARKNESS,
THE CLOSER
THE TARGET IS,
THE MORE
TIGHTLY I
CAN BIND IT.

BUT THIS
SECOND
MOVE... IT'S
DIFFERENT
FROM
THE ONE I
JUST USED.

...I
MOVED
IN TOO
CARE-
LESSLY...

...NO
...



...THAT'S
RIGHT...
I THREW
THAT KNIFE
DOWN
IN FRONT
OF ME AS
THOUGH I
MISSED...

...JUST
SO YOU'D
PICK IT UP
AND COME
AT ME
WITH IT...

SCUFF

CAN'T
BE...!